



Blog | Talk Radio Online | Columnists | Your Opinion | The News | Photos | Cartoons | Books & Movies | Issues | Action Center

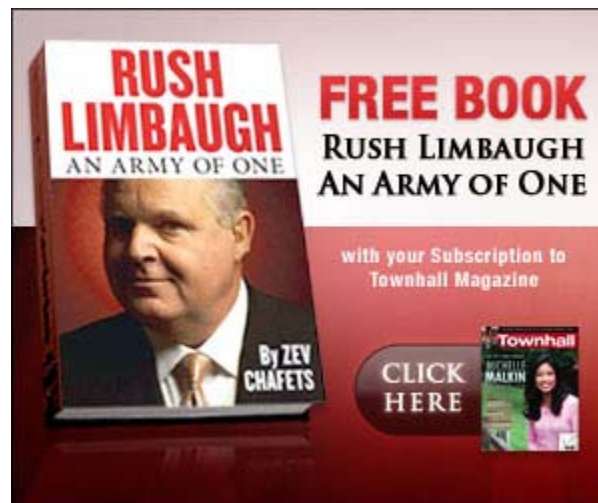
## Rahming Through a Lame Duck Climate Bill?

Patrick J. Michaels

Wednesday, June 16, 2010

Ominous words are emanating again from the president on climate change and energy independence, this time as "a response" to the Gulf oil catastrophe. Somewhere between the war rhetoric and comparisons to the moon landing, President Obama last night (vaguely) told Congress to pass the energy legislation that's been languishing there since last summer.

Add that to White House Chief of Staff Rahm Emanuel's speculation on June 8 that the Senate can pass it "this year" and obvious election difficulties for conservative Democrats if they vote for it, and it would appear that we're headed toward a lame duck session in Congress.



The leadership of the House of Representatives could very easily change hands in the next Congress, and it is likely that major changes—though probably not involving a switch in majority—are on the horizon in the Senate. So, if the Senate indeed does pass far-reaching climate legislation after the election but before the new Congress sits, a compromise House-Senate bill will likely be negotiated by the party that the people have just thrown out of power.

Whatever the Senate passes, and whatever the House agrees to do with it, the legislation will fail to effect any change on climate. The House's radical Cap-and-Trade bill, rushed through last June 26 (before any one had read it) will have virtually no effect on global warming, even by the year 2100, even if every nation that agreed to emissions targets under the United Nations' (also ineffectual) Kyoto Protocol did the same.

Richard Lugar's (R-Ind.) current Senate proposal isn't cap-and-trade. Instead, it's a hodgepodge of subsidies for energy sources no one would normally buy, and an unrealistic fuel economy mandate for autos. It does even less for climate than the legislation the House passed last year.

There are other Senate bills out there, too, from John Kerry (D-Mass.) and Joe Lieberman (I-Conn.), which are pretty similar to the House bill; there is also a bill from Jeff Bingaman (D-N.M.) which mandates costly and inefficient "renewables" that can't make it on their own economic merits, and various other bills that are variants upon either cap-and-trade or renewable mandates.

None are popular. No matter what people think about global warming, good or bad, indifferent, strong or weak, or nonexistent, they simply aren't willing to pay thousands of dollars for fuel taxes, emissions permits, or energy subsidies.

The administration gets this. They knew that people didn't want their health care program, either. They simply don't care.

The serious question is whether the President and his chief of staff will indeed have the political muscle to push a climate bill through after the November elections. A smarter move for the White House might be to just punt and wait for the next Congress, which will be guaranteed to do nothing on climate change, pushing the issue into EPA's regulatory lap. While letting the EPA control our energy economy through force of regulation is a really bad idea, it would be less suicidal for the next Senate class up for re-election in 2012.

I hope the White House does NOT take my advice.

Despite the pomp of an Oval Office address, nothing is really new here. The fact that the White House is now floating the notion of passing ineffectual, expensive, and unpopular climate change legislation through a lame duck Congress is merely consistent with its previous behavior.

Copyright © 2010 Salem Web Network. All Rights Reserved.

#### **[Andy Stern](#)**

The Devil at My Doorstep SEIU Forced Unionism Campaigns

[www.thedevilatmydoorstep.com](http://www.thedevilatmydoorstep.com)

#### **[VA National Gateway](#)**

Efficient, green freight service will bring new jobs to Virginia

[nationalgateway.org](http://nationalgateway.org)

#### **[Climate Change Policy](#)**

News, Developments & Analysis Sign up for free email alerts

[climate.bna.com](http://climate.bna.com)

Ads by Google