

SHOULD I SIGN?

CoalBlue Project Letter to the President

SHOULD I NOT?

If you ...

- support an “all of the above” energy strategy (that includes energy efficiency); *and/or*
- see electric affordability and reliability as critical Democratic priorities; *and/or*
- believe we must get serious get real about addressing the climate challenge; *and/or*
- are a Democrat who wants to win elections ...

YES, SIGN THE LETTER.

If you ...

- believe the world can, in an accelerated fashion, stop using fossil fuels – coal, oil, and natural gas – and fully meet its energy needs through renewable and nuclear energy and demand-side conservation and efficiency – that such is *technically feasible*; and
- believe not only that **CAN** be done, but done at virtually no cost, so that the world **WILL** do it – that it is *economically and politically feasible* as well; and
- are not concerned about the impact of the EPA Clean Power Plan on electric rates and/or electric reliability, or the near-term economic and political risk (for Democrats) of putting energy affordability and reliability at risk ...

NO, DON'T SIGN.

The CoalBlue Project letter to the President stands on two fundamental policy principles:

- *There are three essential elements (“three legs”) to any realistic climate strategy – (1) increased energy efficiency, (2) greater use of non-fossil fuels, and (3) making fossil fuels “low-carbon” through the use of advanced technologies such as carbon capture and use/storage (CCS).*
- *Sustainable energy is more than just clean energy; it must also be affordable and reliable (as well as abundant). In our pursuit of clean, we cannot sacrifice or lose sight of affordability and reliability.*

*The “Don’t Sign” position presumes those principles are either incorrect or are satisfied by the EPA’s 111(b) and 111(d) rules. We don’t believe they are, in either regard. We believe “there is a better way” – through an unwavering commitment to an ambitious program of energy innovation, targeting all three legs of the climate stool, that will make the United States **the** global leader in addressing the climate challenge, without unduly burdening the American economy or the American people.*

There is no path to a clean, low-carbon world without clean, low-carbon coal.

Globally, coal is the fastest-growing fuel of the 21st century. Even though its growth is expected to slow relative to other fuels in the years ahead, coal will remain, in both the United States and around the world, a primary source of energy for decades to come. In its World Energy Outlook 2014, the International Energy Agency (IEA) projects that coal will remain the third largest fuel in the world in 2040, even in its “450 Scenario” for climate stabilization (i.e., keeping atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases at 450 ppm CO₂ equivalent).

The same is true for fossil fuels more broadly. In 2012, fossil fuels accounted for 82% of global energy demand. In the IEA’s 450 Scenario, despite being outpaced by the growth of other fuels over the next three decades, fossil fuels will still account for 59% of total global energy demand in 2040.

How can it be that the world will still rely on carbon-rich fossil fuels for nearly three-fifths of its energy in 2040 and yet be on the path toward climate stabilization? It’s very simple – via carbon capture and use/storage (CCS). The IEA’s 450 Scenario assumes CCS will be deployed on 80% of all of the coal and over 20% of all of the natural gas used to generate electricity in 2040. In the IEA World Energy Outlook Special Report, published this past June in preparation for the COP 21 (Conference of Parties) meetings in Paris in December, CCS accounts for one-third of all of the CO₂ reductions worldwide needed to go from the IEA’s “Bridge Scenario” to its 450 Scenario.

Moreover, according to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), “stabilizing the climate” at 450 ppm in the year 2100, without CCS vs. with CCS, would more than double the cost (+ 138%) – an increase so great as to call into question the viability of such a scenario.

Simply put, if we are to be serious about addressing the climate challenge, we must get serious about accelerating the development and deployment of **CCS – it’s an imperative, not an option.**

Sustainable energy is *abundant, affordable, reliable, and clean.*

In pursuing clean energy, we cannot lose sight of affordability and reliability.

As is stated in the CoalBlue Project letter to the President:

To be focused only on clean is not enough.... Maintaining access to affordable and reliable electricity – domestically and globally – are essential prerequisites to any serious or realistic effort to address the climate challenge.... The American people will object, and other nations of the world will not follow, if the path we chart is one of more expensive, less reliable energy.

Regulatory commissions and agencies in 26 states filed formal comments with the EPA expressing concern about the cost and reliability impacts of the proposed Clean Power Plan on ratepayers and consumers in their states. Beyond individual states, four independent regional grid operators, at least one Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) member, and the North American Electric Reliability Corporation – the international organization responsible for assuring the reliability of the grid in the United States, Canada, and parts of Mexico -- also filed comments that raised reliability (and, in some cases, cost) concerns about the proposed rules.

Nothing would be worse Democratic constituencies such as working families, seniors, minorities, and others – or for the climate movement itself – than to have electric rates rise rapidly, or for the lights to go out anywhere in America, in the years following adoption and implementation of the EPA’s Clean Power Plan. Yet, the chances of either or both happening cannot be dismissed or ignore.

*For more information and additional background documents,
visit the Action page of the CoalBlue Project website at <http://coalblue.org/action/>.*