

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT ...

... THERE IS A BETTER WAY

for America ... for the environment ... and for Democrats

Coal will be with us for decades to come. It will not be wished away. There is no realistic path to a clean, low-carbon world that does not include clean, low-carbon coal.

Globally, coal is the fastest growing fuel of the 21st century. Even as its growth slows relative to other fuels, coal will remain, within the United States and around the globe, a major source of energy – the world’s third largest in 2040 according to the International Energy Agency and its “450 Scenario” for climate stabilization – for decades to come. If we are to have any hope of reducing global CO2 emissions, we must learn to manage the carbon in coal, not think or hope we can simply wish it away.

Sustainable energy is *abundant, affordable, reliable, and clean* – all four, not one. We risk (a) Democratic success at home and (b) U.S. leadership abroad if we disregard issues of reliability and affordability.

As Democrats, we risk abandoning core Democratic constituencies at home – working families, seniors, minorities, and more – and their abandoning us, if, in our pursuit of clean energy, we lose sight of the importance of affordable and reliable electricity.

The EPA’s proposed power plant rules raise significant concerns in both regards. Moreover, the United States cannot solve the climate/carbon challenge alone; the most we can do is lead – and lead we must. Yet, other nations will not follow our lead if the course we chart relies upon a shift to higher-cost energy.

Environmental challenges are best met through the development of new technologies, not by asking people to do without or lower their standard of living.

Whether it be at home or abroad, the climate/carbon challenge will not be won by asking people to forgo economic growth and prosperity. Success will come through a new era of energy innovation that makes all clean energy cheaper and reliable.

Igniting an era of energy innovation will require public investment and public leadership. Government has an essential role to play, but must adopt a broader, more balanced approach.

There are three legs to “the climate stool” – (1) increased energy efficiency, (2) increased use of non-fossil fuels, and (3) the development and deployment of carbon-mitigating technologies, such as capture and utilization/storage (CCS) for fossil fuels (both coal and natural gas). Current policy is heavily skewed toward the first two legs, all but ignoring the third – an imbalance and a shortfall that seriously undermines our ability to truly address the climate/carbon challenge.

The CoalBlue Project letter to the President does not say “no” to tackling the climate challenge.

To the contrary, it offers a realistic path forward that will make the United States a true global leader in addressing that challenge in a way that will not unduly burden the American economy or American people.

The CoalBlue letter sets forth “a better way” than what the EPA has proposed...

better environmental policy ...

better energy policy ...

and better politics for Democrats.

?? Questions ?? – contact Jon Wood, CoalBlue Project President, at jwood@coalblue.org or (410) 662-2130



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