

Blame it on Congress

Regarding "Big Oil won't change its ways until we speak" (Page B7, June 12), thank you for Jane Dale Owen's essay highlighting the urgency of climate change, elevated CO2 levels, and the need to stabilize these levels. However, she pins the blame on Big Oil companies rather than where the blame belongs: with the U.S. Congress.

For more than 25 years it has been clear that fossil fuel users emit pollution into the atmosphere causing climate change. Their free pollution causes health risks, rising sea risks, storm risks, drought and heat risks and also causes expenses for the public (medical expenses, storm and flood clean up, higher food prices). This is plain unfair. However, Big Oil is not responsible for setting national policy to preserve the purity of our air and water, nor is it responsible for ensuring that our economy works in a just and equitable manner. This is the role of government.

To lower emissions, Congress should stop allowing free pollution by enacting a carbon tax. Whenever an economic system charges for pollution, polluters reduce their pollution.

A carbon tax would correct the injustice of free and rampant pollution and would spur private investment in the new technologies that Owen wants Big Oil to undertake.

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<http://www.houstonchronicle.com/opinion/letters/article/Sunday-letters-Prison-heat-climate-change-4615433.php>