

## Obama plan won't limit states' use of natural gas

Your editorial highlighting the EPA's final regulations referred to "the president's decision to keep the current percentage of natural-gas use as states strive to meet these ambitious carbon-dioxide reducing goals." This reference is surprising because it is false. The EPA is setting goals for states, but states may achieve those goals however they want. They are free to use as much or as little natural gas as is best for them; the regulations do not limit natural gas.

Here's what Michael Levi of the Council on Foreign Relations says about the false idea that natural gas will be constrained (my italics added):

"There is a lot of reporting, *including by many who should know better*, claiming that the plan will result in massive amounts of renewable generation and no increase in natural gas above business as usual in the long run (2030ish in this case) ... But - and this is really important - the "building blocks" tell you nothing about what measures states will actually use to comply. Once the building blocks are used to determine state targets, the states decide how to meet those targets. At that point, it's as if the building blocks never existed. If a state wants to use only solar to meet its targets, it can do that. If it wants to use only natural gas or nuclear, it can do that too."

Many commentators acknowledge that the Clean Power Plan regulations are not our best option. Congressional legislation enacting an economywide carbon fee would be a superior policy.

A revenue-neutral carbon fee, paid by fossil fuel producers and revenue rebated to the public, is our "first-best" option.

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