

# Public should not pay to protect industry emissions

WTE reporter Trevor Brown's article "DEQ seeks funding for climate change plan" described the decision to apply for a Clean Power Plan extension, costs to file for an extension and paying these costs with general funds and with air quality emission fees.

Some state officials argue that emission fees paid by companies should cover all the costs. State Republican Rep. Mike Greear argued, "If it's going to be an ongoing cost for the benefit of these emitters should we not, instead of dipping into the general fund, have that self-paying or self-supported?" Mr. Greear's logic is impeccable. When the state incurs costs on behalf of specific industries, those industries should pay the costs. The public shouldn't pay costs to protect those emitting industries.

This is part of Exxon's rationale too. In December, Exxon explained to Houston Chronicle editors how emissions from their products cause global warming, the serious climate risks created by this warming and why they (and other fossil fuel producers) should pay emissions taxes on their products. Their payments, based on the amount of carbon in their products, would help cover costs caused by their products but that U.S. taxpayers currently pay.

These costs include dealing with sea level rise, longer, more intense wildfire seasons and health effects of particulates, extreme heat and more widespread insect-borne diseases. Exxon's suggested carbon emissions tax has a secondary benefit: It would be a cheaper, fairer, less chaotic system to cut carbon emissions than EPA regulations. For more information, contact Citizens' Climate Lobby.

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