

State effort to cut emissions falls short

Judy Weiss 9:43 p.m. CST December 13, 2014 [LINK](#)

Deirdre Shesgreen described Senator Claire McCaskill's arguments ("[McCaskill: Obama climate change plan is too aggressive](#)," Dec. 10) to eliminate incremental emissions reduction goals, and trust states to meet long term EPA targets. McCaskill's arguments suffer from a fundamental logical flaw. Missouri already showed bad faith regarding efforts to cut emissions.

In 2008, Missouri residents voted overwhelmingly to establish renewable energy standards, gradually increasing to 15 percent by 2021.

State officials overruled the will of the people, and ignored renewable energy. Why should they be trusted again? Senator Roy Blunt opposes the EPA regulations, offering unconvincing reasons. Blunt claims the regulations will increase Missourians' electricity prices. However, he forgets there's no such thing as a "free lunch." As long as Missourians save with cheap coal electricity, they'll spend more on healthcare to deal with asthma, heart disease and other illnesses exacerbated by fossil fuel pollution.

Blunt misleads readers by insisting he wants to protect them from electricity price increases. If so, he would sponsor a carbon tax bill to replace EPA regulations. A national carbon tax would be paid by coal producers. It'll increase the cost of coal electricity, motivating utilities to invest in clean energy.

Blunt's carbon tax bill should rebate all tax revenues to the American people. The public will be protected from price increases while utility companies switch to emissions-free energy. Blunt also says regulations stifle the economy. But Blunt doesn't say that studies show a carbon tax on fossil fuel producers with rebates to the public will stimulate the economy and grow jobs.

Let's be blunt: There are reasons to oppose the EPA regulations, but senators who complain about the regulations without enacting a carbon tax are engaging in hokum.

As Harry Truman said: It's plain hokum. If you can't convince 'em, confuse 'em. It's an old political trick. But this time it won't work.