

WV should lead the way on carbon pricing

Dear Editor,

Your excellent editorial explained the price war that killed your coal industry: environmental regulations didn't terminate coal's market share, cheap natural gas smothered coal.

It takes no imagination to see how this story ends: within a couple years, solar will be as cheap, or cheaper, than natural gas throughout much of the U.S., even without subsidies. Attentive utilities, like NRG, already restructured planning for solar's growth. Conscientious states, like Nevada, are attracting solar industry.

Are your elected officials doing everything imaginable to help you? They could do something quite creative: They could sponsor a national carbon fee to help you survive coal's demise. A national carbon fee would generate mountains of money. Imagine your Senators negotiating for some of that money to help you transition to a post-coal, renewable energy economy. Even a low carbon fee that increases gradually will generate about \$100 billion initially, increasing to \$400 to \$600 billion annually. Imagine half a trillion dollars annually, some of it creating your new businesses.

Your members of Congress have thousands of friends who want to work with them on an ingenious carbon pricing design. It could help you recover from coal's death; it'll help us slow climate change's assault on our coasts and tourism industries.

Readers should call Senators Joe Manchin and Shelley Capito urging them to introduce carbon pricing legislation. Please contact Citizens' Climate Lobby to learn about our offbeat solution: West Virginia leadership on carbon pricing -- it's so crazy it could work.

Rabbi Judy Weiss
Brookline, Mass.

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