

Letters, Oct. 4, 2013: Poverty myths and climate change

W.Va., Ky. Should unite on climate change

Editor:

Rep. David McKinley presented climate-change misinformation at a congressional hearing, drawing stern rebukes from the secretary of energy and creating the impression that West Virginians don't understand the basics of climate-change science. McKinley's unfortunate line of questioning was embarrassing for West Virginia because the vast majority of Americans understand climate change is serious and want the government to seek solutions.

Rep. Ed Whitfield of Kentucky asked a more reasonable question than McKinley. Whitfield asked how President Obama's climate-action plans would help people who are losing their jobs as coal mines close. Unfortunately, the president has refused to promote a plan for fighting climate change that would create plenty of new jobs for all the miners who have lost -- or will lose -- their jobs.

The president refuses to promote a carbon tax to be paid by fossil-fuel companies and rebated to taxpayers. A carbon tax would fight climate change by encouraging everyone to be more energy efficient and to switch to renewable energy. A carbon tax would use the free market to create new jobs because private investors would be encouraged by a carbon tax to finance new renewable-energy projects that are more labor intensive than fossil-fuel businesses.

Instead of arguing about the science, McKinley should stick to what he knows: West Virginians want secure jobs; coal jobs are no longer secure.

Readers should please ask McKinley to co-sponsor with Ed Whitfield a revenue-neutral carbon tax bill. Let the congressional delegations from West Virginia and Kentucky work together to make sure a climate-change plan stimulates job growth in these states.

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