

# Without carbon tax, nuclear energy makes no sense

In his oped, Brydon Ross says, "Without its (nuclear energy's) emissions-free power, it's unlikely states will ever meet the Environmental Protection Agency's ambitious carbon emission reductions and compliance timelines as set out in the Clean Power Plan."

False. Although the CPP hasn't gone into effect, many states' goals have already been met. Moreover, of the 27 states suing to stop the CPP, 21 are on target to meet their 2024 emissions goals, and 18 will likely hit their 2030 targets without great changes. They'll meet their targets, in part, because the cost of solar, wind and natural gas electricity have dropped below coal's costs -- simple economics forced utilities to use cheaper, cleaner energy.

When an energy industry lobbyist like Ross tries to sell us on nuclear energy, we should wonder why he doesn't talk straight. Why doesn't he say it's our most expensive electricity option? Why doesn't he mention wind and solar energy drop in cost by 19 percent and 24 percent, respectively, every time their capacity doubles? Why doesn't he even use the words "wind" and "solar?"

Ross mocks environmentalists for wanting to fight climate change, but resisting nuclear energy. There are plenty of environmentalists who would support nuclear energy, if Congress enacts a national carbon tax and utilities then get to choose, based on full cost analysis, that nuclear energy is the best electricity for a particular region.

But without a carbon tax, nuclear energy makes no sense. And the longer Ross waits to support a carbon tax, the cheaper renewables and renewable storage will become . . . and then nuclear will certainly be priced out of the market.

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