

Heritage Florida Jewish News

Yes to climate change through lower emissions

Dear Editor,

Excellent column by Alan Kornman regarding encouraging Jews to become more active seeking climate change mitigation through lower emissions. Rabbi David Kay gave great examples, but when asked about the Heritage Foundation's opposition to EPA regulations which will curb the use of coal and other dirty fuel, Kay chose not to answer a hypothetical question. However, since that article was written, the EPA has already made it clear what their regulations will be (they will release the regs on June 2).

An upcoming Torah reading guides us to reject the Heritage Foundation's opposition to these regulations. Why? In Parashat Korah, men complain against Moses. Rabbinic tradition says there are complaints and causes for the sake of heaven and these will endure. But other causes not for the sake of heaven will not endure. Korah's was not for the sake of heaven. Why? Because Korah sought his own personal advancement and had selfish reasons for disputing Moses. Only arguments raised for altruistic reasons are for the sake of heaven, and therefore legitimate.

Regarding the Heritage Foundation's objections to EPA regs, the Heritage Foundation is heavily funded by fossil fuel interests and has monetary reasons for arguing against EPA regs. Moreover, Heritage Foundation doesn't mention these selfish reasons for opposing the EPA. Instead they claim that the regs will hurt American families, businesses and manufacturers. Thus they pretend their objections are altruistic. But they are not. If Heritage Foundation were worried about American families and businesses they would argue for Congress to pass a carbon tax and rebate all the proceeds to American families or decrease business taxes. Rather Heritage wants nothing to be done about climate change because doing something will hurt their personal wealth and advancement. Heritage Foundation does not want your readers to know that a carbon tax would be an excellent way to lower emissions and protect American families from energy price increases. The tax would be paid to fossil fuel companies, and it would be rebated to households. If energy prices increase due to the tax, families will be protected by rebates. Heritage Foundation doesn't

want the public to understand this because it will hurt the Heritage Foundation and their patrons.

When climate change leads to more asthma and heat-related illnesses do you think Heritage Foundation will be lobbying for more health benefits for American families? No, they will still be trying to repeal national healthcare.

Furthermore, various studies have shown that there is no support for the argument that protecting the environment hurts the economy. Rather, states that have already introduced emissions reduction legislation survived the recent recession better than states that have been ignoring climate change. Why? Because green energy creates more jobs than are lost as fossil fuel businesses shrink. Because energy efficiency measures require more construction workers, more innovations, and an upgraded energy grid.

In the next few weeks more studies will be released that indicate that the faster we reduce emissions, the stronger our economy will be.

And the safer our nation will be from the severe consequences of climate change.

Readers should please urge Senators Bill Nelson and Marco Rubio and Representative John Mica to all support legislation to reduce emissions, making sure they understand that a carbon tax with rebate to the public is the best policy to lower emissions and protect families.

Rabbi Judy Weiss

Volunteer member of Citizens' Climate Lobby, an organization of volunteers lobbying for legislation to stabilize the climate

<http://www.heritagefl.com/story/2014/06/13/opinions/yes-to-climate-change-through-lower-emissions/2849.html?m=true>