Should a ‘carbon tax’ be imposed on fossil fuel companies in an effort to reduce pollution?

ROBERT STEWART
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President Barack Obama has long been a supporter of the idea of a federal “carbon tax,” which would impose a tax on the carbon content of fossil fuels that companies produce in an effort to curb emissions of harmful pollutants into the atmosphere. House Majority Whip Steve Scalise, a Metairie Republican, introduced a concurrent resolution late last year urging Congress to reject the idea. The House approved the resolution on June 10 by a 237-163 vote. Supporters of the carbon tax say it would reduce harmful pollutants using market-driven forces. Opponents say it would cause an enormous amount of American jobs to be shipped overseas.

—Robert Stewart

Chair, Sierra Club Delta Chapter of Louisiana

“Yes”

The problem with climate change is real. We really have to do something about it. The president’s clean power plan is a good step in that direction. But overall, the most efficient thing for the economy would be to do some sort of a carbon tax. Right now, what you have is immense subsidies to the dirty fuel companies for coal and oil, which in effect is a negative carbon tax.

The carbon tax is probably a more acceptable way to achieve some balance in the economy because it’s a market-based approach to solving the problem. The polluter pays, so whoever sells the dirty form of energy containing the carbon, they pay back into the economy for the damage the carbon does to the environment and to public health.

We would need much less regulations if we implemented a carbon tax, because it would set a price on pollution, would set a price on carbon and then you would have a market-based approach that would create incentives to move toward clean energy. We could in essence have less regulation if we had a carbon tax.

Rep. Steve Scalise

House Majority Whip, R-Metairie

“No”
The National Association of Manufacturers, the people that make things in America, have confirmed that we would lose 1 million jobs in America if a carbon tax was imposed. Where would those jobs go? They would go to countries, ironically, that don’t have the good environmental standards we already have.

The Heritage Foundation said that this kind of carbon tax would actually increase the cost of everything that families buy by over $1,400. Families are going to pay $1,400 more every year for the cost of a carbon tax that the other side wants to defend. And to yield what? To just yield an opportunity for countries like China and India to grow their economies at the expense of ours.

If you look at what this administration has done through radical rules and regulations through all of its agencies ... the results of these radical regulations are shifting and running jobs away, out of our country to foreign countries, like China, like India. And they want to keep it going.

*Scalise’s comments are taken from his House testimony on June 10.*

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