

Administration Attempts Overhaul Of Energy System Via Regulations

Obama's administration has become legendary in bureaucratic circles by adopting more than 600 major rules since he took office in 2009, according to a study conducted by the American Action Forum. That computes to an average of one rule every three days government offices are open.

Some of the most controversial regulations have come under the administration's attempts to battle climate change.

Kathleen Hartnett White, Distinguished Senior Fellow-in-Residence and Director of the Armstrong Center for Energy & the Environment at the Texas Public Policy Foundation and former chairman of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, recently issued a paper stating that step-by-step, these "climate actions" are "dismantling the energy systems on which modern economic growth and improving human welfare is utterly dependent."

Hartnett White pointed out that the administration's dismantling of the energy industry has come through Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulation of carbon dioxide under the Clean Air Act; regulatory initiatives to kill coal, leading to closure of over 244 coal plants and bankruptcies of the major coal companies; a mandatory plan to re-engineer the national electric system known as the Clean Power Plan (CPP); a crackdown on methane—the primary component of natural gas; the first global Paris agreement to decarbonize; and an overlooked but extremely broad trilateral effort known as the Three Amigos (U.S., Canada and Mexico), a climate plan to include a perplexing "gender responsive approach" to climate action.

Some of the more radical climate policies currently being discussed mirror the Three Amigos' agreement, including generation of fifty percent of electricity from renewables within ten years; meeting one-hundred percent of residential energy needs with clean sources by 2030 and installation of 500 million solar panels within four years, she said.

However, serious questions exist about the ability of exotic fuels, such as wind and solar, to provide the amount of electricity needed by American consumers. The Energy Information Administration (EIA) notes that wind power generated only 4.7 percent of total U.S. electricity in 2015. Solar power accounted for only 0.6 percent. Globally, wind produced only 2.6 percent of generation.

"Wind and solar hardware may be rapidly growing on the ground, but as a share of total power, actual generation increases at a snail's pace," Hartnett White said.

"The installed generating capacity of wind and solar is only 88.6 gigawatts (GW) of total U.S. capacity (1065 GW). If actual generation is calculated according to EIA's average capacity factor, wind only contributed 26 GW of actual generation," she noted.

"Installing 500 million solar panels within a few years with a goal to meet all residential demand with zero-carbon energy by 2030 is an exorbitant pipe dream," Hartnett White said. "The cost of fabricating and installing that many solar panels could approach one trillion dollars. How many voters would support such a public investment with a national debt of almost \$18 trillion, declining middle-class incomes, and the weakest economic recovery since 1949?"

The Obama administration is reluctant to even discuss the economic costs to implement such a radical overhaul of our energy sources, while continuing attempts to scare the public into believing man's future existence depends on drastic changes in energy consumption. Secretary of State John Kerry recently stated that "air-conditioning is a greater threat to civilization than ISIS." "Such absurd, climate hype at the highest levels of government is offensive to a wide swath of the electorate," she said.

"Current renewable technologies cannot replace the goods and services now delivered by the concentrated, abundant, cheap, reliable, versatile, and controllable energy in fossil fuels without major damage to economies, major reduction of the global food supply, major decline in basic human welfare and major disruption of global geopolitics. The climate crusade is no longer a peripheral, aspirational matter. Executive action without popular consent has enlisted our country in this mad 'battle against climate change.' It's time to be upfront and engage in a battle against deluded energy policies," Hartnett White concluded.



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