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Climate bill moving forward

On June 26, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the American Clean Energy and Security Act of 2009 (HR 2998) with a roll call vote of 219 to 212.

The bill now moves to the U.S. Senate where it will be debated and no doubt changed.

In its current form, the bill exceeds 1,200 pages! I would guess few, if any, legislators read the bill prior to casting their vote. That may be cynical, but I think it is still a good guess.

This bill does not provide clean energy, and it does not provide any security. What this bill provides is higher costs for you and me. This bill is far-reaching. It creates numerous new government agencies, and it's economy-wide. Plain and simple, this is a tax or revenue bill for the federal government under the guise of clean energy and security.

All utilities are facing

increased costs today. There are many factors forcing higher rates, but the adaptation of HR 2998 will cause future electric rates to be unaffordable to many citizens. This bill could have devastating effects on manufacturing in this country.

I am not going to argue the issue of global warming. What I want to impress on each citizen is simple; if you want legislation that ensures lower carbon emissions, then propose that legislation. The current bill, HR 2998, does not ensure reduced emissions. It ensures increased tax revenues and higher electric bills.

The bill promotes a system called CAP and TRADE, the theory being that emissions are "capped" at a designated level and emission allowances are "traded" between entities that have lower and higher emissions. The thinking is that utilities, transportation, manufacturing and other emitters will lower their emissions instead of buying the allowances. The allowances are dispersed through a very complicated process, which includes an allowance auction. The revenue from the allowance auction goes directly to the federal government.

The bill requires a 17 percent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions below 2005 levels by the year 2020. That is a mere 11 years from today. The technology to accomplish this does not exist today and is unlikely to exist 11

Manager's Corner

by
Gary Jackson,
CEO/General
Manager



years from now.

The auction is open to all bidders, including non-utilities. Consider this scenario: the Chinese government (or any speculator) buys all allowances and then sells them back to us at inflated prices, thus making our products too costly on the world market.

If we want clean energy and a secure future without the burden of foreign oil, we need a strong, realistic energy policy. We have ignored this fact for too long. We have resources and technology to do this today.

Nuclear energy is the clean energy source that is safe, reliable and available. Former Greenpeace co-founder and former president Patrick Moore recently said that Greenpeace made a "big mistake in opposing nuclear power." He stated, "If it hadn't been for the environmental movement back then, there would be a lot less coal plants and a lot more nuclear plants in the United States and around the world today."

We cannot forget coal. Many have said that the U.S. is the Saudi Arabia of coal. We cannot waste that resource. Coal can first

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Get the jump on drafty windows

Windows provide our homes with light, warmth and ventilation. But when winter sets in they can have a downside.

Placing your hand against a window pane on a chilly fall morning proves the point: if the pane feels cold, it's a good bet you can reduce energy costs by either insulating your existing windows or installing new, energy-efficient upgrades.

Insulating with draperies is a low-cost quick fix to drafty windows and can reduce heat loss from a room up to 10 percent. And they're just as helpful in hot summer months by blocking sunlight. White plastic-backed drapes can reduce heat gain by up to 33 percent.

Interior storm window panels are another low-cost fix (available at most hardware stores), and consist of flexible or rigid plastic installed over or adhered to existing window panes. Installation is fairly simple, and panels are either taped on or mounted with Velcro, magnetic strips or snap-in seals. Put them up in autumn and remove them in spring to reduce winter heat loss by up to 50 percent.

If you're in the market for new windows altogether, be sure to choose energy-efficient models that will shave heating, cooling and lighting costs year-round.

Energy Star® has established a set of energy performance ratings, tailored to four climate zones across the United States, to guide you in selecting windows perfect for your home. These performance ratings are broken into several categories, although the two most basic are U-Factor and Solar Heat Gain Coefficient (SHGC), which can be found on window stickers or packaging.

In simple terms, U-Factor measures how easily heat can flow through a window, not counting direct sunlight. The lower the number, the more energy efficient the window.

SHGC measures how much heat from sunlight can be absorbed by the window. A high number means the window remains effective at collecting heat during winter. A low number provides greater shading ability and may be best for Southern climates.

Here in HREA's service territory, windows for the North/Central climate zone are best. Look for a U-Factor of less than or equal to .40. You also can visit www.energystar.gov for more details on our climate zone and other criteria to consider when shopping for new windows.

Sources: U.S. Department of Energy Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, Energy Star



Ownership.

Would you trust a business more if you owned it?

Cooperative businesses are owned by more than 154.7 million Americans, including:

- 87 million who own their credit union
- 39 million who own their electric co-op
- 3 million who own their housing co-op

Maybe that's why we're more trusted than businesses owned by Wall Street investors.

Cooperatives.

Owned by Our Members,
Committed to Our Communities.



Climate bill moving forward

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be our bridge to a more nuclear-based generation resource, but coal can provide even more. Coal can be gasified to burn like natural gas in power plants. It can be liquefied for transportation fuel.

There are those who say using coal for transportation is too costly. I say, how costly is our dependence on foreign oil? With an aggressive plan, we can drive the cost down.

It is time we stop pretending that we can make changes and actually start making the changes that put us on the road to having clean energy and security for America at a price we can afford.

This country needs an economic recovery. The Congressional Budget Office estimates that HR 2998 will cost the American people \$846 billion in the first 10 years. That sounds like too much of a burden to me to promote economic recovery. If we want action on "global warming" or "global climate change," pass legislation that addresses that issue.

I would urge all voters to contact their elected officials and say we want honest legislation, not a huge tax bill that is sure to increase prices and drive more jobs out of West Virginia.

Cooperatives hit the mark with consumers

Playgrounds flood with games during school recess. A great example is hopscotch. The game can be played by one child or a large group, and the rules are simple. A course is laid out, typically drawn in chalk on pavement. Blocks are numbered in the order they must be hopped in, with a home, or safe, spot at the end. Then players toss a marker into designated squares and hop through the course.

In some ways, the game reflects how cooperatives were formed. Co-ops—not-for-profit, member-owned businesses—may serve a few people or large groups. But all co-ops use the same “course,” following seven key principles. By “hopping” on each principle, co-ops provide an efficient consumer resource focused on service, not profit.

October is National Cooperative Month. To celebrate we’re taking a look at the important role co-ops play in our community.

What are co-ops?

Cooperatives are owned by their members—the people who receive services from them—and are found in many industries. For example, more than 900 electric co-ops serve 42 million Americans. According to the National Cooperative Grocers Association, 30 percent of farmers’ products are marketed through more than 3,000 farmer-owned cooperatives in America. Familiar brands like SunKist, Land O’Lakes, Cabot Creamery, Ocean Spray and Sun-Maid all are co-ops formed to help farmers distribute products.

In banking, 10,000 credit unions provide financial services to 84 million members across the nation. Co-ops also have been formed to provide child care, insurance and housing. Nearly 30,000 cooperatives operate at 73,000 locations nationally.

Guiding Principles

The cooperative movement traces its roots to a store started by weavers in the town of Rochdale, England, in 1844. The Rochdale model revolved around a set of guidelines drawn up by one of its members, Charles Howarth. When introduced into the U.S. by the National Grange in 1874, these “Rochdale Principles” fueled a cooperative explosion.

Although stated in many ways, the Rochdale Principles hold that a cooperative must provide:

Voluntary And Open Membership: Membership in a cooperative is available to all who can reasonably use its services, regardless of race, religion, sex or economic circumstances.

Democratic Member Control: Co-ops are democratically controlled, with each member having one vote. As a result, control remains in the hands of all cus-

tomers. Directors are elected from the membership.

Members’ Economic Participation: Cooperatives provide services “at cost” and remain not-for-profit regardless of the value of benefits delivered. Any money left over after all expenses are paid—margins—belongs to the members. Each member’s share in the margin is determined by the amount of his or her use of the co-op’s services.

Autonomy And Independence: Cooperatives are self-sustaining, self-help organizations controlled by their members. If cooperatives enter into agreements with others or raise money from outside sources, they do so on terms that maintain democratic control as well as their unique identity.

Education, Training and Information: Keeping members, directors, managers and employees up-to-date on issues so they can effectively govern the co-op. Communication, particularly with young members and opinion leaders, helps generate necessary public support for cooperatives.

Cooperation Among Cooperatives: Mutual support helps cooperatives improve services, bolster local economies and deal more effectively with social and community needs.

Concern For Community: Cooperatives develop communities with programs supported by the membership.

To learn about electric cooperatives, visit www.nreca.coop. For details on different types of cooperatives, visit www.go.coop.

What are cooperatives?

Cooperatives are businesses that

- are owned and democratically controlled by their members — the people who use the co-op’s services or buy its goods — not by investors.
- return surplus revenues (income over expenses and investment) to members proportionate to their use of the cooperative, not proportionate to their ownership share.
- are motivated by service to their members, not by profit.

At Harrison Rural Electric Cooperative, we feel that’s an excellent way to describe who we are and what we do.

Our cooperative was formed to bring electricity to you, our members, at a reasonable cost. We aren’t taking money from you and sending it to faraway investors.

We are local people serving local people and investing in *our* communities.

Avoid electrical hazards at Halloween

The decorative lights, fog machines, black lights and animatronics of Halloween make for adventurous, entertaining times for children and adults. With these decorations, though, the risk of fire or electrocution could be lurking around the corner. It is important to check for electrical hazards before accidents happen. Use the following tips to keep electrical hazards from haunting you this Halloween:

- Inspect electrical decorations. Look for cracked or frayed sockets, loose or bare wires, and loose connections.
- Read manufacturer's instructions regarding installation and maintenance. Check the instructions to see how many light strings can be connected together.
- Always unplug light strings before replacing any bulbs.
- Fasten outdoor lights securely to trees, walls or other firm supports. Do not use nails or tacks that could puncture light strings or electrical/extension cords.

- Provide well-lit walkways and porch lighting for trick-or-treaters. Make sure the walkways are clear for trick-or-treaters.



- Don't overload extension cords or place them near, or in, snow or water.
- Make sure electrical decorations are approved by a nationally recognized certification organization like "UL" (Underwriters Laboratories) and marked for outdoor use if you

are using them outside. Check www.cpsc.gov or www.ul.com for recalls. Many Halloween toys have been recalled in the past by the CPSC (Consumer Product Safety Commission).

- Do not overload your circuit breakers or fuses.
- Plug lights and decorations into circuits protected by ground-fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs). Portable outdoor GFCIs can be purchased where electrical supplies are sold.
- Make sure decorative lighting is well-ventilated, protected from weather and a safe distance from anything flammable like dry leaves and shrubs. Do not coil power cords or extension cords while in use or tuck under rugs or drapes.
- Turn out all lights and decorations before leaving or going to bed. Always have at least one fire extinguisher available and know how to use it.

Sources: Home Safety Council, www.homesafetycouncil.org; Electrical Safety Foundation International, www.electrical-safety.org

Protect children and pets from electrical hazards

by CHRIS GRAMMES

Accidents around the home result in millions of injuries to the most vulnerable members of your family—young children and pets—each year. For example, approximately 2,400 children receive emergency room treatment annually for injuries caused by inserting objects into electrical receptacles, according to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC).

With a few precautions, these and other injuries can be avoided.

Install tamper-resistant outlets (TROs) that protect against small children inserting foreign objects into them. Simple plastic caps typically used can be easily removed by some children.

Keep electrical cords tied up or out of sight.

Unplug all appliances when they are not being used, such as hair dryers or coffee makers.

Keep appliances out of children's bathrooms.

Teach children not to touch appliances when they have wet hands and to keep appliances away from water.

Teach children other basic safety tips such as staying away from outlets and not touching electrical cords.

Some of the same tips apply to pets.

Keep electrical cords away from cats and puppies who love to chew on them.

Make sure nightlights and appliances are fully plugged in. Partially exposed prongs can be a temptation to curious critters.

Keep halogen lamps away from pet play areas. If knocked over, they could start a fire.

Keep appliances in bathrooms away from water. Playful pets can knock radios or curling irons into water, creating a dangerous situation.

Discourage cats and dogs from curling up for naps behind electrical equipment such as computers.

