



## Congress Attacks “Illegal” EU Carbon Tax on Americans

A bipartisan coalition in Congress is going after a European Union scheme to impose carbon taxes on Americans flying to and from Europe, overwhelmingly approving a bill to stop the “illegal” tax. The EU’s CO<sub>2</sub> regime is so unpopular that governments around the world and even the United Nations have also asked the bloc to back down.



The European carbon plan would force all airlines flying to or from Europe — regardless of where they took off or their destination — to participate in the EU’s “Emissions Trading System.” Due to begin in January of next year, the scheme means each flight would have to acquire so-called “carbon credits” to offset the CO<sub>2</sub> released during flight.

The House bill to prohibit U.S. airlines from paying the taxes, known as the “[European Union Emissions Trading Scheme Prohibition Act](#)” (H.R. 2594), was introduced by Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman John Mica (R-Fla., above). It quickly found broad bipartisan support and was passed by a voice vote late last month.

“The European Union’s extraterritorial action is inconsistent with long-established international law and practice ... and directly infringes on the sovereignty of the United States,” [the legislation](#) reads. If approved by the Senate and signed by President Obama, the Secretary of Transportation would have to prevent American commercial airlines from participating.

“This appropriately named EU scheme is an arbitrary and unjust violation of international law that disadvantages U.S. air carriers, threatens U.S. aviation jobs, and could close down direct travel from many central and western U.S. airports to Europe,” said Rep. Mica. “Congress and the United States government will not support this ill-advised and illegal EU tax scheme.”

Other Congressmen were even more blunt. Aviation Subcommittee Vice-Chair Rep. Chip Cravaack (R-Minn.), for example, said the EU eco-taxes were “equivalent to the paying of ransom to the Barbary pirates for safe passage.” Others worried that if the supranational regime gets away with imposing the tax, it might seek to extract foreigners’ money in other ways too.

However, not all of the legislation’s supporters are motivated by opposition to carbon taxes or even illegal EU taxation schemes being foisted on Americans. In fact, many Congressmen who co-sponsored the bill are against the EU plan simply because it might interfere with the erection of a global CO<sub>2</sub> regime under the United Nations.

“Reducing aviation emissions is a goal that is worth pursuing, but the EU’s go-it-alone approach will fly in the face of the international community and is not the way to find an international solution to an



Written by [Alex Newman](#) on November 7, 2011

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international problem,” said legislation co-sponsor Rep. Nick Rahall (D-W. Va.), the ranking democrat on the House Transportation Committee. Like EU bosses, Rahall would like to see Americans pay carbon taxes straight to a global body.

“Only through international dialogue will we reach consensus on how to deal with a global challenge, but I am confident that, if our European friends will act in good faith, we will more than rise to the occasion,” he concluded. “For the meanwhile, this bill will protect U.S. airlines and all Americans who rely on them for travel and employment from the unjust effects of the EU’s plan.”

Indeed, the recently approved legislation blocking the European scheme specifically calls for imposing a worldwide carbon regime. And it encourages the EU to pursue such a global tax, too.

“The European Union’s action undermines ongoing efforts at the International Civil Aviation Organization to develop a unified, worldwide approach to reducing aircraft greenhouse gas emissions and has generated unnecessary friction within the international civil aviation community as it endeavors to reduce such emissions,” [the bill](#) notes. “The European Union and its member states should instead work with other contracting states of the International Civil Aviation Organization [ICAO] to develop such an approach.”

Most Democrats who co-sponsored the bill insisted their support for the measure was not aimed at preventing carbon taxes — only at stopping “unilateral” plans that might disrupt the formation of a truly international CO<sub>2</sub> regime. “Aviation carbon emissions is a global problem that needs to be addressed with a global solution,” claimed bill co-sponsor Jerry Costello (D-Ill.), the House Aviation Subcommittee’s ranking Democrat.

For the same reason, even the UN and the ICAO are [urging](#) the EU to kill the tax scheme. Another complaint among global-warming alarmists and pro-global-carbon-tax advocates is that it remains unclear how the EU will utilize its new-found source of wealth.

But [international opposition](#) is growing fast. The government of India is [reportedly](#) considering a lawsuit against the European regime at the World Trade Organization (WTO) if negotiations fail to stop the tax. And Indian officials quoted in news reports were fuming about the EU plan.

The governments of China, Australia, Canada, Japan, Russia, and dozens of other nations are standing up to the EU tax as well. Even the Obama administration is [opposed](#) to the plan.

Meanwhile, a coalition of U.S.-based airlines is also trying to stop the scheme with a lawsuit at the “European Court of Justice.” Many analysts, however, [expect](#) the EU court to rule in favor of the EU.

But in Europe, serious anti-carbon tax pressure might begin to build soon, too. “Many companies are already having a hard time staying afloat without having to worry about countries not wanting to fly planes to Europe,” [noted](#) travel analyst Isabel Taylor. “Either way, this new scheme is going to prove to be hard on the travel and tourism industry. This goes double for the airline industry.”

Beyond European tourism, however, are even more serious problems. As *The New American* has reported, carbon-credit schemes associated with the EU and other supranational regimes have been responsible for a wide variety of atrocities.

In Uganda, for example, an EU and World Bank-funded company accredited by the UN was caught [brutally evicting](#) tens of thousands of Africans from their lands to plant “carbon credit” trees. And in Honduras, native people are [being murdered](#) to allegedly save the climate by producing more “carbon credits” for Europe.



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But like the UN, the EU is largely dependent on member states for its budget. So both institutions are frantically seeking their own revenue sources — and hysteria over [discredited theories](#) about CO<sub>2</sub> on climate was thought to be the perfect justification.

The EU officially implemented its ETS in 2005 by capping CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. But the regime is rapidly expanding, with air travel becoming the latest target. The UN, meanwhile, [wants to impose](#) the tax system on every person in the world.

Despite billions of taxpayer dollars spent on global-warming propaganda, [climate alarmism is still dying — albeit slowly](#). Polls consistently show plummeting public acceptance of man-made global warming theories.

But governments are rushing ahead to implement their carbon tax and cap-and-trade schemes anyway — most of which will dramatically increase energy costs. The poor will be the [worst hit as they struggle](#) to heat their homes.

If the EU tax plan is allowed to go forward, it will cost American consumers and companies billions of dollars. But the bill to prohibit U.S. participation in the scheme “would have no significant impact on the federal budget,” [according](#) to the Congressional Budget Office.

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