



Will Reining in the EPA “Hurt the American People”?

[Reuters reports](#) that the House Energy and Commerce subcommittee has passed a bill “that would block the EPA from regulating big carbon dioxide polluters such as oil refineries and power plants.” Carbon dioxide is a natural part of the earth’s atmosphere, and is the fourth most common gas in the atmosphere, following nitrogen, oxygen, and argon. It is only under Administrator Lisa Jackson that the EPA has pushed the ideological agenda of reclassifying this common atmospheric gas [as a pollutant](#). When the legislative branch of government refused to subject the United States to a punishing system of “[cap and trade](#)” regulations that would have further devastated an already crippled economy, the EPA began its push to punish American industry in a manner quite similar to that which would have taken place under the failed system of carbon credits.



While many elected representatives are understandably concerned about the agenda of a federal agency that seems bent on usurping their constitutional role, Sen. Boxer insists that the problem is not the agency or its ideological agenda: The real problem is that some of those representatives are trying to reassert their authority over the EPA. [As CNSNews reports](#):

Senate Environment and Public Works Committee Chairwoman Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.) said that anyone who opposes the efforts of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to regulate greenhouse gas emissions was “hurting the American people.”

“Anyone who tries to stop the EPA from enforcing the Clean Air Act — a bipartisan landmark piece of legislation — is hurting the American people,” Boxer said at a news conference on Thursday. Under the Clean Air Act, the EPA can regulate greenhouse gases, which Boxer described as “dangerous.”

Despite Sen. Boxer’s effort to terrify the American people and demonize her fellow elected representatives, the broad category of “greenhouse gases” includes many things which are far from “dangerous”; [water vapor](#), for example, is classified as a greenhouse gas. Of course, in sufficient quantities or concentration, virtually any substance can be injurious to human health, but the regulation of the global atmosphere is far beyond the competency of any agency. In short, Jackson and Boxer may be capable of inflicting further harm on the American people, but it is highly unlikely that they will manage to change the earth’s atmosphere in the process.

But Boxer went further than simply charging her opponents with “hurting the American people” in some vague way by reining in the EPA; she meant quite specifically that such a thing would harm the



Written by [James Heiser](#) on March 13, 2011

health of the nation. Boxer is quoted in the CNSNews story as declaring: “So I’m standing here and I’m saying to any elected official here or anywhere, frankly, that when you try to stop the enforcement of the Clean Air Act you are going directly against the health of the American people.”

Boxer failed to explain how higher energy costs and fewer jobs would be beneficial to the health of the American people. It’s hard to take care of your health when you don’t have a job and couldn’t afford to drive to the doctor if you need one. But then, the EPA regulatory putsch isn’t about health: It’s all about power, and not just the kind that comes from an outlet in the wall.

Photo: Sen. Barbara Boxer



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