

THE DEWEESE REPORT

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Corporate Social Responsibility

Why private industry keeps telling us to “Go Green”

By Tom DeWeese

I’ve sounded the alarm over the dangers of Sustainable Development and the agenda for top-down control through what proponents call the “Three Es,” which includes the Environment, the Economy, and Social Equity. A fourth rail to imposing Agenda 21 is called Corporate Social Responsibility. It is the direct result of the merging of the Three Es. CSR is the map to understanding why corporations are actively promoting the “green” agenda – even to the detriment of their own business.

Picture, if you will, an Isosceles triangle. And label each point: 1. Government Power 2. Corporate Money 3. NGOs Agenda

The truth is, corporations aren’t always willing players in the partnerships – neither is government, for that matter. Many times both are answering to pressure from activists with a specific agenda.

Those activists come in the form of Non-governmental organizations (NGOs). They are determined, dedicated and radical. They mean business and they have the means to force their will on companies. It’s almost masochistic to watch how they treat companies.

Perhaps you’ve heard the term Corporate Social Responsibility. The idea is that corporations must not conduct their affairs merely to achieve profits for their stockholders – or even to just provide products and services for their customers. According to the doctrine, businesses must also help further the “well-being of society.” You know, “like a good neighbor, State Farm is there.” To many businesses the term means treating customers, employees and suppliers with

respect and integrity, while making sure you aren’t damaging the environment. It’s just good business.

But something much more sinister has control over the force of corporate social responsibility. As Niger Innis, president of the Congress on Racial Equality, points out, the ideological environmental movement is a powerful \$4 billion-a-year U.S. industry. On the international level it’s an \$8 billion-a-year gorilla.

Many of its members are intensely eco-centric, and place much higher value on wildlife and ecological values than on human progress or even human life. They have a deep fear and loathing of big business, technology, chemicals, plastics, fossil fuels and biotechnology. And they insist that the rest of the world should acknowledge and live according to their fears and ideologies.

They are masters at using junk science, scare tactics, intimidation and bogus economic and health claims to gain even greater power. These people, with their radical political agenda are now succeeding in forcing Corporate Social Responsibility on more and more companies.

They assert the right to dictate corporate social responsibility by declaring themselves stakeholders, even though their only stake is philosophical. In most cases, they have no economic interest in the companies.

They place ever-increasing demands on business to take ever more radical measures in the name of protecting the environment or in the name of social equity. Products have been

banned. Even whole industries course. have been destroyed.

Here's an example of the power of this force tied to Sustainable Development policies is an incident that took place in Ireland. There, McDonalds applied to build a new restaurant in a community. The government demanded an environmental impact study for the project. Now, that's not so unusual. Only this environmental study wasn't concerning the building of the restaurant. Rather, it was to study the effects of the food to be served on the health of the residents of the community.

McDonalds has been beaten to a pulp over the issue of obesity, human health and animal rights. The leading NGO in this fight is a radical nut-group called the Center for Science in the Public Interest which openly advocates that people eat next to nothing. No meat, no farm animals at all, no dairy, just basically some pre-selected vegetables. They are a constant thorn in the side of the Food and Drug Administration, constantly filing law suits to control food choice. They are the leaders of the infamous food police. And they hate McDonalds as much as they hate letting you decide what you want to eat.

As a result of these attacks, today McDonalds is in the forefront of promoting the green agenda. Now you may understand why the city of San Francisco recently targeted McDonald's Happy Meals to be banned. CSR is rampant in public schools where zealots are busy working to control what children eat. Never mind that a child may go hungry because he/she refuses to eat tofu. Meanwhile, to make the controls work, corporate monsters like McDonalds must also be kept from tempting children with something they might like. All for the common good, of

Another example of corporate masochism comes from Caterpillar, the equipment giant that provides machinery for the mining industry. A few years ago, Caterpillar announced it was joining the United States Climate Action Partnership (USCAP), which is lobbying for caps on carbon dioxide emissions.

If USCAP reaches its goal for mandatory federal restrictions on the emissions, the cost of energy will be driven up, hurting Caterpillar's customers and shareholders. When asked if he had done a cost analysis on this policy before joining USCAP, the Chairman of Caterpillar said he had not and would not. Therefore, he was blindly endorsing a policy that could put his own company out of business.

Why? Because he has been forced to accept a political agenda over business sense. To do otherwise would mean possible government sanctions, regulations or fines. It's the new way to do business in America. It's the force of the triangle. That's Corporate Social Responsibility. It isn't responsible at all. And it's not very corporate. It's enforcement of a political agenda.

Many times these issues begin with what appears to be completely absurd press releases by obscure fringe groups. But businesses must not ignore the source of their rants. Once they begin to give sanction to small demands in an attempt to put on a good face - the bar will be continually raised until the business becomes merely a tool for a political agenda that is in direct opposition to their ability to stay in business as the mantra of "Go Green" results in higher prices, sacrifice and fewer choices for consumers.

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E-VERIFY AND THE EMERGING SURVEILLANCE STATE

Subjecting all Americans to an International databank

By Tom DeWeese

The rush is on to force into law mandatory use of the E-Verify system that will mandate that all businesses use this hand-me-down from the Social Security Administration in order to hire anyone. Republican Representative Lamar Smith has introduced HR 2164 and House action is expected at any time. Say proponents, E-Verify is necessary to stop illegals from getting jobs. Many freedom-loving Conservatives are supporting the idea in a desperate attempt to control illegal immigration. Is this the right way to protect America?

To answer that, it's necessary to ask another question. If government won't do its job, is that a reason for Americans to surrender their liberty? Do you think that is a funny question? Well, it is actually what a number of Conservative activist groups are now advocating in the name of stopping illegal immigration through enforcement of E-Verify.

The fact is, the U.S. government is not doing its job to secure the border and stop the flood of illegal aliens from rushing across it. Even though Congress has passed legislation demanding that a fence be built, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has dragged its feet, deliberately holding up the project. Moreover, DHS is fighting efforts in local communities to allow police to arrest illegals. There is little effort to tighten visa security, or allow law enforcement to track down and deport those who stay here past their allotted time. Those illegals caught committing crimes are still allowed to leave, only to easily and surreptitiously return at their will. The border is a sieve. There is no border control – period.

Rather than work to strengthen the borders and take steps to stop illegals from getting here in the first place, many now seek “internal enforcement” instead of the “rule of law.” In other words, take action while leaving the barn door open.

The answer, say some very powerful anti-immigration forces, is to put the burden of control on American businesses. Jobs, they say, are the draw to illegals, so business should be the first line of defense. The answer, we are told, is simply to get tough with business and stop the ability of illegals to get a job. Such a plan, while appealing to desperate Americans, can have dire consequences if a nation desires to remain free.

Chief among the schemes to “get tough” with business is the universal enforcement of something called the E-Verify System. It is the brainchild of the Department of Homeland Security and is an electronic employment verification (EEV) program. Essentially, E-Verify uses the Social Security databases to check potential employee Social Security Numbers to determine if the job candidate is a US citizen. Employers are to simply enter in the applicants Social Security Number to verify they are an American citizen (of legal status) and therefore eligible for employment.

The Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 made it illegal for employers to “knowingly” employ unauthorized workers, and E-Verify (then known as “Basic

Pilot”) grew out of the requirement for work-eligibility verification. Since its inception the program has been voluntary for all businesses. However, if Smith's bill passes, voluntary will change to mandatory.

In 2007, after the dramatic defeat of the illegal immigration amnesty bills, Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff announced several changes to the E-Verify System. The agency now requires more than 200,000 federal contractors to use E-Verify, an increase of more than 1,076 percent over the 17,000 employers registered in 2007 (with only about half actually using) E-Verify. The system now requires an “enhanced photograph capability” that will allow employers to check photographs in E-Verify databases. DHS is expanding the number of databases E-Verify checks to include visa and passport databases; and the agency now wants direct access to state Department of Motor Vehicle databases. DHS will require employers to fire employees if they are unable to resolve “no match” discrepancies within 90 days. If the employers do not terminate the workers' employment, the business will fines of \$11,000 or more. DHS also will raise fines against employers by 25 percent and increasingly use criminal action against employers, as opposed to administrative action.

With those changes, E-Verify is now being sold as the atom bomb in the war on illegal immigration. Described as “the most effective tool to protect vulnerable American workers from unscrupulous businesses that hire illegal foreign workers to displace American workers or depress wages.” Sounds great – of course all of this confidence in the E-Verify System's ability to stop illegal immigration is celebrated BEFORE most businesses have even been required to use it.

The fact is, there are major problems with the E-Verify System. It is a hugely flawed system and will have a severe effect on both naturalized U.S. citizens, as well as those who are native born.

Millions of employees could mistakenly fall into legal limbo.

Independent analysis of existing government databases have found unacceptably high error rates. Currently those voluntarily using E-Verify have experienced near double-digit error rates. Forcing more than 7 million employers to verify the legal status of more than 160 million current employees, as well as the millions of future hires, means that potentially, as many as 17 million citizens and legal US residents will be mistakenly found “ineligible” to work.

The fact is, the Social Security Administration (SSA) never purges a Social Security number once it's assigned. The Numident database (which E-Verify uses) currently contains 435 million records; more than 100 million more than the

ED note: As we have revealed the many aspects and dangers of Agenda 21 to our freedom and way of life, many have asked me why Sustainablists support local farms and locally grown food, Doesn't that go against their top-down control plans? There are two answers: first, allowing only locally grown foods cannot supply the food needs of the world. The result will be higher prices and food shortages. That leads to the need for population control – a major aspect of Agenda 21. Second, it is easier to control small, local farmers and what they grow, further controlling the food supply. The following article from the Center for Consumer Freedom shows just how nuts this "grow local" movement can get. TAD

What's Wrong with Eating Local?

The short answer, of course, is nothing. "Locavorism" is a social movement dedicated to limiting a would-be chef's food options to what is grown "in season" and can be found within 100 miles. If you're into devolving your diet and abandoning "globavore" eating (is that a word?), it's entirely up to you. But if you get snooty about it and start wearing your new eating philosophy on your sleeve, don't be surprised when the backlash sets in.

At least that's what renowned chef Mark Liberman is hinting at on his well-regarded foodie blog. Because as your great-great-grandparents would tell you (if they could), there's really nothing "new" or revolutionary about eating local.

What I don't like is this new self indulged movement that says to be a locavore you need to go to a farmers market, pickle something from the winter to enjoy in the spring, buy from local vendors, go to a farm and meet the man who raises your chickens and make your own vinegar from leftover grapes during harvest. Do I agree with all these?? Yes, of course I do!! But these are things that have been around for centuries, in fact I have several cookbooks in my library at home that date back to the 1800's that focus on this. So, when I hear someone tell they are a locavore, I have nothing to say. Locavores have good ideas, relevant ideas, but there is nothing new.

On his own blog this week, Sacramento Bee restaurant critic Blair Anthony Robertson took notice of Liberman's judgment, adding his own suspicions of the "self-congratulatory component to it that tends to be annoying".

I even encountered a menu in Roseville that touted "local" halibut. I'm not a fisherman, but I didn't think halibut were found wending their way through the shallow waters of the American River, though I have spotted a sea lion at Sutter's Landing. I had always thought that the biggest and best halibut were caught in Alaska. When I asked the server, she wasn't sure what "local halibut" meant, so she checked with the chef. Turns out, "local" meant Pier 36 in San Francisco ...

Too often, touting local or farm to table is an excuse to take the rest of the night off. I mean, if it's local and we can even name the farm, we don't have to do anything interesting to the cooking or even to the prepping. Yes, I've eaten plenty of steak of laudable provenance only to encounter lots of local gristle.

For most consumers, of course, farm-to-table dining ethics aren't where the rubber meets the road. Most households are more concerned with how available food is, what it costs, and whether or not they enjoy it enough to have it again. And in most parts of the country, eating strictly local would mean avoiding veggies during the coldest months. (How healthy is that?)

For locavores who haven't sufficiently hamstrung their cooking options, they can always become raw-food vegans, or "invasivores" (the "if you can't beat 'em, eat 'em" approach to managing invasive species), or even "freegans" (because it's hard to eat more "local" than your nearest dumpster).

These are all legitimate, if unconventional, choices. Different strokes for different folks. Just don't do too many victory laps around the kitchen.

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nation's total population, legal or otherwise. In December 2006, the SSA Inspector General reported approximately 18 million of these records are not accurate. Yet, DHS wants E-Verify made mandatory for the entire American work force.

“As a matter of simple math,” says Jim Harper at the CATO Institute, “that means that if E-Verify were to go national, on the first day 1 in 25 legal hires would be bounced out of the system and asked to go down to the Social Security office and straighten out the problem.”

Imagine the problems faced by honest, law abiding Americans who are thrown out of the system. In most cases, these are not well-to-do executives who can simply take the afternoon off to fix the problem. They are lower level workers who depend on every dime they earn to pay the rent and feed the kids. Simply taking a day off to go down to the local Social Security office isn't an easy thing.

From the moment they are found to be a “tentative non-confirmed” they have eight days to contest the claim and to prove they are legal. A day off work is required because the Social Security office is only open from 8:30am to 5:00pm. If the employee fails to make it to the office in the 8 days, the employer is required by threat of fine and criminal charges to fire the employee.

Moreover, as the E-Verify system is forced on all employers and the large numbers of employees (as reported above) are thrown from the system, there will be a massive run on the Social Security office. The SS Administration is simply not equipped to handle such a massive influx of cases. The infrastructure to handle it is not in place.

As anyone who tried to get a passport a few years ago after the government makes significant, mandatory changes in a system, knows how badly managed typical-government inefficiency made for massive lines. New rules concerning passports forced Americans to flood passport offices, but the offices weren't prepared to receive and process the massive number of applicants. The E-Verify System would force much larger numbers into unprepared Social Security offices.

Now, under E-Verify, employees that do make it to the SS office may be forced to return day after day. Jobs and income will be lost as the Employment Eligibility Verification (EEV) process does not permit employers to hold the jobs or delay start dates. The clock starts to tick the second the tentative non-confirmed notice is issued and runs out in exactly 8 days.

If it's all been a mistake, the burden of proof is on the employee to prove who they are and that they are legal citizens or residents eligible to continue working. These law-abiding American citizens enter the Social Security Office as criminal suspects with the potential of being deported. Contrary to American law, they are guilty until proven innocent. Incredibly, there is no appeals process in

place to challenge the findings of E-Verify.

More Fraud – Not Less

The E-Verify System is promoted as the only foolproof way to stop illegals from obtaining jobs. Advocates say the program has enough safeguards to protect citizens. Not so fast. Once the system is in place there are huge gaps that allow massive fraud.

To work efficiently, an E-Verify System allows employers access to a centralized record of all legal residents and citizens. Given the government's mixed record on data security, this could become a one-stop-shop for identity theft.

First, illegals and those employers wishing to hire them can simply work under the table, paying cash, hiding the transaction from any official source. Illegals don't regularly file income taxes, so the hire isn't hard to hide.

On a larger scale, it must be understood that illegal immigration is big business and it has the money and the means to create false documents and to provide “legal” identification, complete with matching names and Social Security numbers.

Today, many illegals simply make up names and Social Security numbers, hoping not to get caught. Of course, the E-Verify system would catch them. However, in response, an illegal only has to obtain the name and SS number of a legal citizen. While that legal person may already be working a job, it will not create an alert if the information is used by someone else.

Such information can be available through a wide variety of situations, including stolen lists and select employees with access to databases like the Social Security lists. Organized crime can certainly have well placed cohorts. The process would create a massive criminal market for Americans citizens' personal information. The only way to stop it is for the federal government to create a new database that records every new hire and monitor all employees in the nation. The real losers in this game are the people who now have had their identity stolen in the process. *They* may be the ones accused of identity theft as they suddenly discover someone else is using their name and SS number.

Of course, the federal government has proven it has no ability to safeguard the records in its current databases. And the more databases established, the more opportunity for theft. Not long ago there was a major scandal as federal employees were caught “sneaking a peek” at the passports of a large number of celebrities and even presidential candidates including Barack Obama, John McCain and Hillary Clinton.

In August of 2007, the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) lost a laptop computer which contained the records of 33,000 people who had signed up

for its pre-screening program, designed to give travelers quicker access through airport security. The unencrypted information in the database included names, addresses, driver's license numbers, passport numbers, Social Security numbers, Alien registration numbers, and current credit card numbers.

The laptop was in the possession of employees of a private company contracting with TSA for the project. TSA signup documents for the project promised that the records would be maintained at its headquarters in Arlington, VA and "other authorized TSA or DHA secure facilities, as necessary, and at a digital safe site managed by a government contractor." In reality, the laptop was stashed in a locked office at the San Francisco Airport. There are a lot of laptops containing personal information of Americans being taken home by government employees these days. Why?

Mission Creep

The greatest threat from the establishment of a system such as E-Verify is the creation of perhaps unintended results. As Cato's Jim Harper surmises, "The things to make a system like this impervious to forgery and fraud would convert it from an identity system into a cradle-to-grave biometric tracking system."

"Mission Creep" is the commonly used description for a program designed for a specific purpose, but is later used for much more. A prime example of mission creep is the Social Security System itself. It was designed specifically as a means for people to deposit money into a government program to supplement their retirement years. Today, there are those who want to take its databank of users and transform it into an identity system to prove American citizenship. The excuse - "well, it's already there!" That's mission creep.

As reported in the beginning, the Department of Homeland Security intends to increase the E-Verify system to include biometric photographs and extended databases. On numerous occasions DHS spokesmen have expressed the desire to create a national identification card that would include near complete information on its bearer. This would include job, medical, tax, and school records. It would also include biometric and facial recognition, with RFID microchips that could monitor the whereabouts of every American.

E-Verify is the beginning of the creation of such a system. Is it worth it for Americans to endure an existence in a well-controlled matrix of surveillance simply to catch some illegal workers? Communities across the nation are proving that illegals will stop coming here - in fact actually leave - if they are made to feel unwelcome. Arizona's much derided immigration law has proven that a get tough policy results in illegals avoiding the area.

Manassas, Virginia is another locality that had a huge illegal immigration problem, only to see a huge decrease in such activity when it passed tough new laws to arrest and deport them.

And the most dangerous aspect of E-Verify is that it sets the stage for a national workforce management system which gives the government ultimate power to decide who works and who doesn't. Will Obama appoint a "Jobs Czar" to comply with the new E-Verify law? It is designed to ultimately subject all Americans to an intrusive global surveillance system as the information in DHS databanks is being transferred to international systems through such DHS partners as American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators (AAMVA) and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO).

The federal government has been given the mandate by the people to close the borders and keep them out. It doesn't require cradle-to-grave biometric tracking of every legal American to accomplish that task. Facts show that such "internal enforcement" would not reduce the illegality, it would promote it. Border security combined with real efforts by the government to keep illegals out of the country will do much more to stop the flood than by chaining American citizens to massive, all-knowing surveillance data banks.

Those who profess a love of freedom must learn quickly that granting government massive new powers to control employment is not freedom, but tyranny beyond any ever experienced in the United States. HR 2164 and E-Verify in any form must be stopped.

Special thanks to extensive reports on the E-Verify issue by Jim Harper at CATO (Electronic Employment Eligibility Verification, Franz Kafka's Solution to Illegal Immigration), and the Electronic Privacy Information Center (EPIC), (E-Verify System: DHS Changes Name,

Wind and solar power cost much more than power generated from coal

	Cents/KWH	Percent Higher than Coal
Coal	3.79	0%
Natural Gas	5.61	+48%
Nuclear	5.94	+57%
Wind	6.64	+75%
Solar Thermal	18.82	+570%
Solar Photovoltaic	37.39	+887%

In other words, wind power costs 75percent more than power from coal, and solar is 570 - 887 percent more expensive than coal.

Source: *The Cap and Trade Handbook, the Heartland Institute.*
www.heartland.org

Continued from Page 8

beyond what we are already realizing through steadily declining emissions under existing regulations.

Besides bringing mythical health benefits, EPA claims its lower national emission standards will simply put all states and utility companies “on the same level playing field.” This pious rhetoric may be fine for states that get little electricity from coal. However, for states (especially manufacturing states) that burn coal to generate 48-98% of their electricity, the new rules will be job, economy and revenue killers.

Energy analyst Roger Bezdek estimates that utilities will have to spend over \$130 billion to retrofit older plants, under the measly three-year (2014) deadline that EPA is giving them, under a sweetheart court deal the agency brokered with radical environmental groups. On top of that, utilities will have to spend another \$30 billion a year for operations, maintenance and extra fuel for the energy-intensive scrubbers and other equipment they will be forced to install.

Many companies simply cannot justify those huge costs for older power plants. Thus Dominion Power, American Electric Power and other utilities have announced that they will simply close dozens of generating units, representing tens of thousands of megawatts – enough to electrify tens of millions of homes and businesses. Illinois alone will lose nearly 3,500 MW of reliable, affordable, baseload electricity – with little but promises of intermittent pixie-dust wind turbine electricity to replace it.

Electricity costs are set to skyrocket, just as the President promised. Consumers can expect to pay at least 20% more in many states by 2014 or shortly thereafter. According to the Chicago Tribune, hard-pressed Illinois families and businesses will shell out 40-60% more! How’s that for an incentive to ramp up production and hire more workers? How’s that “hope and change” working out for families that had planned to fix the car, save for college and retirement, take a vacation, get that long-postponed surgery?

For a mid-sized hospital or factory that currently pays \$500,000 annually for electricity (including peak-demand charges), those rate hikes could add \$300,000 a year to its electricity bill. That’s equivalent to ten full-time entry-level employees ... that now won’t get hired, or will get laid off.

And it’s not just private businesses that will get hammered. As the Chi Trib notes, if the Chicago public school system wants to keep the lights on and computers running for two semesters, by 2014 it will get hit for an extra \$2.7 million it doesn’t have, to pay for skyrocketing electricity costs.

Carry those costs through much of the US economy –

especially the 26 states that get 48-98% of their electricity from coal-fired power plants – and we are talking about truly “fundamental transformations.” Millions will be laid off, millions more won’t be hired, millions of jobs will be shipped overseas – and millions will endure brownouts, blackouts and increasing social unrest.

EPA generally refuses to consider the economic effects of its regulations, except to insist that even its most oppressive rules will generate benefits “far in excess” of any expected costs. Perhaps it will at least consider the obvious, unavoidable and monumental adverse physical and mental health impacts of its rate hikes and layoffs – on nutrition, healthcare, depression, family violence and civil rights progress.

The Environmental Protection Agency has always had a horse-blinder attitude about environmental policy. Under Administrator Lisa Jackson, it has become a truly rogue agency.

It’s time for Congress, state legislatures, attorneys-general, courts and We the People to bring some balance and common sense into the picture. Otherwise 9.1% unemployment – with Black and Hispanic unemployment even higher – will soon look like boom times.

Paul Driessen is senior policy advisor for the Committee For A Constructive Tomorrow and Congress of Racial Equality, and author of Eco-Imperialism: Green power - Black death.

Agenda 21 Connection to CSR

“Emphasis on social environmental and economic sustainability has become a focus of many CSR efforts. Sustainability was originally viewed in terms of preserving the earth’s resources. In 1987, the World Commission on Environment and Development published a landmark action plan for environmental sustainability. The commission, named after former Norwegian Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundlandt, defined sustainability as “meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.” Companies are now challenged by stakeholders including customers, employees, investors and activists to develop a blueprint for how they will sustain economic.”

The EPA is using a mercury scare to turn out our lights.

Time to clear the air.

By Paul Driessen

Ever since public, congressional and union anger and anxiety persuaded the Environmental Protection Agency to delay action on its economy-strangling carbon dioxide rules, EPA has been on a take-no-prisoners crusade to impose other job-killing rules for electricity generating plants.

As President Obama said when America rejected cap-tax-and-trade, “there’s more than one way to skin the cat.” If Congress won’t cooperate, his EPA will lead the charge. Energy prices will “skyrocket.” Companies that want to build coal-fired power plants will “go bankrupt.” His administration will “fundamentally transform” our nation’s energy, economic, industrial and social structure.

EPA’s proposed “mercury and air toxics” rules for power plants are built on the false premise that we are still breathing the smog, soot and poisons that shrouded London, England and Gary, Indiana sixty years ago. In reality, US air quality improved steadily after the 1970 Clean Air Act was enacted.

Moreover, since 1990, even as US coal use more than doubled, coal-fired power plant emissions declined even further: 58% for mercury, 67% for nitrogen oxides, 70% for particulates, 85% for sulfur dioxide – and just as significantly for most of the other 80 pollutants that EPA intends to cover with its 946-pages of draconian proposed regulations.

It’s time to clear the political air – and scrub out some of the toxic disinformation that EPA and its allies have been emitting for months, under a multi-million-dollar “public education” campaign that EPA has orchestrated and funded, to frighten people into supporting its new rules. PR firms, religious and civil rights groups, environmental activists and college students are eagerly propagating the myths.

EPA’s “most wanted” outlaw is mercury. But for Americans this villain is as real as Freddy or Norman Bates. To turn power plant mercury emissions into a mass killer, EPA cherry-picked studies and data, and ignored any that didn’t fit its “slasher” film script. As my colleague Dr. Willie Soon and I pointed out in our Wall Street Journal and Investor’s Business Daily articles, US power plants account for just 0.5% of mercury emitted into North American’s air; the other 99.5% comes from natural and foreign sources.

Critics assailed our analysis, but the studies support us, not EPA – as is abundantly clear in Dr.

Soon’s 85-page report, available at www.AffordablePowerAlliance.org. The report and studies it cites fully support our conclusion that America’s fish are safe to eat (in part because they contain selenium and are thus low in biologically available methylmercury, mercury’s more toxic cousin), and blood mercury levels for American women and children are already below FDA’s and other agencies’ safe levels.

Not only are EPA’s mercury claims fraudulent. They are scaring people away from eating fish, which are rich in essential fatty acids. In other words, EPA is actively harming people’s nutrition and health.

One of the more bizarre criticisms of our analysis contends that mercury released in forest fires “originates from coal-burning power plants,” which supposedly shower the toxin onto trees, which release it back into the atmosphere during arboreal conflagrations. In fact, mercury is as abundant in the earth’s crust as silver and selenium. It is absorbed by trees through their roots – and their leaves, which absorb those 0.5% (power plant) and 99.5% (other) atmospheric mercury components through their stomata.

Another bizarre criticism is that mercury isn’t the issue. The real problem is ultra-fine (2.5 micron) soot particles. So now the “power plant mercury is poisoning babies and children” campaign was just a sideshow! Talk about changing the subject. Now, suddenly, the alleged health benefits and lives saved would come from controlling soot particles. That claim is as bogus as the anti-mercury scare stories.

Even EPA and NOAA data demonstrate that America’s air already meets EPA’s national standard, which is equivalent to disseminating an ounce of soot (about one and a quarter super-pulverized charcoal briquettes) across a volume of air one-half mile long, one-half mile wide and one story high. That’s less than you’re likely to get from sitting in front of a campfire, fireplace or wood-burning stove, inhaling airborne particulates, hydrocarbon gases and heavy metals. (Search the internet for Danish, EPA and Forest Service studies and advisories on these popular “organic” heating and cooking methods.)

Simply put, EPA’s proposed rules will impose huge costs – for few health or environmental benefits,