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Study says climate law could cost Texas lots of jobs

By TOM FOWLER Copyright 2010 Houston Chronicle Feb. 17, 2010, 10:48PM

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CLIMATE LAW

Federal climate change laws could hit energy-rich Texas particularly hard, says a study from the Texas Public Policy Foundation. It projects these effects by 2030:

- Chemical manufacturing:** Down as much as 14 percent.
- Coal production:** Down as much as 87 percent.
- Gross state product:** Down by \$29.9 billion to \$40.8 billion.
- Jobs:** Down by 196,928

Source: Texas Public Policy Foundation

Proposed U.S. climate change laws could cut Texas' manufacturing output by more than 5 percent and increase electric prices by as much as 52 percent by 2030, according to a study to be unveiled today by a conservative Texas think tank.

The state's energy-intensive industries — including oil and gas producers and chemical plants — would be hit particularly hard by laws aimed at putting a price tag on greenhouse gas emissions, said Margo Thorning, one of the authors of the study done for the Texas Public Policy Foundation. It will be released at a Houston news conference.

"If pending legislation such as the Waxman-Markey bill is enacted, the Texas economy will experience slower growth and thousands of valuable jobs will be lost," Thorning said, referring to the climate change bill passed by the House of Representatives last year. "Energy-intensive industries with foreign competition could reduce their operations in Texas and relocate in countries without similar mandates."

The study is not the first to try to measure the impact of climate change laws on the state. The state Comptroller's Office released a study last year that said the proposals would cost 170,000 to 425,000 jobs and reduce gross state product by as much as \$58 billion by 2030.

A study by the Electric Reliability Council of Texas estimated the effect of the laws on typical electric bills in the state could range from a \$10-a-month reduction to a \$54 dollar increase.

Luke Metzger, director of Environment Texas, says the new study and past ones fail to take into account the potential benefits of

tougher air standards. In addition to the health advantages of cleaner air, Waxman-Markey would create nearly 20,000 new "green" jobs in Texas Metzger said.

And a study by the University of Texas' IC2 Institute says Texas could generate up to 123,000 new jobs if it moved aggressively toward solar power panel manufacturing and installation.

Texas a target?

The study doesn't show much difference in the effects on consumers in Texas and other states, Metzger said, although Gov. Rick Perry has said the federal government "has a target on Texas' back."

"Transitioning to a clean energy economy is going to require changes in Texas industry," Metzger said. "Even absent global warming legislation, the oil industry won't last forever. But we can get ahead of the curve and invest in energy sources that won't run out, like solar and wind, and make sure Texas maintains its role as energy capital of the world."

Cornyn statement

Sen. John Cornyn, R-Texas, who is expected to join Texas Public Policy Foundation members at today's release of that group's study, said he will continue to oppose cap-and-trade while looking to Texans for better alternatives.

"We can and should reduce our dependence on foreign oil by prioritizing the production of existing resources here at home and encouraging private investment in energy technologies like next-generation biofuels, the recovery of natural gas from shale, and in wind, solar and nuclear power," Cornyn said in a prepared statement.

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- BoboJones** wrote:
 That's Democrats for you. The loss of jobs based on a hoax.
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- DansTheMan** wrote:
 For you Texans with jobs that keep voting DEMOCRAT, please think REAL HARD next time. For as far as the Democratic Party is concerned, you are "useful idiots" (that's a term used by Karl Marx, describing people that support communists, but have no idea that they're next in line for punishment). If you look at what Washington is doing now, it should be obvious what's going on:
 1) Manned space flight by NASA will end...10,000 jobs (at least) lost at JSC, maybe even JSC itself when it's done.
 2) The factory that makes military vehicles in Sealy 'loses' a contract that they've had for decades...thousands more jobs GONE.
 3) Cap and Trade...Refineries and other heavy industry gets punished severely in the Senate plan, there are virtually no carbon credits given to them.
 4) Clean Air clampdown from EPA...to punish Houston and other areas of Texas for having industry that produces key materials for the country, but also pollutes.
 5) The President's budget eliminates tax breaks for oil exploration. You may not like these tax breaks, but they employ 10s of thousands of Texans.
 6) Former President Bush was from Texas.
 .
 So who benefits now:
 1) As the JSC jobs go away and JSC gets closed down, NASA centers in the much more Democrat-friendly states of California, Maryland, and Ohio get those jobs for use in unmanned programs...they're already goating about it. For Florida, they announce a \$8 Billion dollar high-speed rail line as a consolation prize, but NOT A DIME for Texas.
 2) The Sealy jobs went to a company in Wisconsin.
 3) The Carbon Credits go to industries in much more Democrat-friendly states, such as California.
 4) The industrial jobs simply disappear from the United States. They go to China and other countries (better than having them stay in Texas, from their standpoint).
 5) Oil exploration is cut in half...we import more oil. The money from the tax breaks go to so-called clean energy uses (such electric cars), which happens to be located mainly in Democrat-friendly states.
 6) Don't think for a moment that this doesn't factor into things. Texas is HATED in this administration, for giving the United States two Bush's as president. This is their way of thanking us
 .
 It should be pretty clear that there is a pattern here. I don't care if you're Black, Hispanic, Asian, Green, or White, if you have a good job in Texas, this administration simply wants to take it away from you. It is up to you guys to send a message back that Washinton should not be punishing individual states, based on some built-up ANGER from the past. DO NOT GIVE THEM YOUR VOTE ANYMORE (regardless of what your union, or your leaders, tell you).
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