



What Are Your Energy Policy Recommendations?

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Let's brainstorm some solutions to our fossil fuels crisis. Let's say that you have been made dictator of the world. Your policies are going to be implemented without question. What energy policies would you enact? (Let's restrict this to energy, as this could really get way off topic otherwise.)

Here is what I would do (with respect to the U.S.) I would go on TV and just have a frank conversation with the public. I would hit on both Global Warming and Peak Oil, explaining that we have to find other energy solutions because 1). Peak Oil is going to force us to; and 2). Global Warming is strongly suggesting that we do it ASAP. I would go on to explain that there are no magic technological solutions waiting in the wings to save us. We aren't going to go to the filling station and fill up on E85 or hydrogen. At least not any time soon. Sacrifice is required, for the sake of future generations. I would explain some of the possible scenarios if we don't begin to sacrifice now. We either plan it now, or it hits us later with no parachutes for the fall.

The problem, I would explain, is that fossil fuels are simply too cheap. We use them too casually. We must stop doing this. We have to stop and really think about our fossil fuel usage. So, starting today, the tax on fossil fuels will be increased by \$3/(barrel of oil equivalent) each month for at least the next 3 years, at which time this tax will be reviewed. The tax will apply to crude oil, natural gas, coal, tar sands, shale oil, etc. All fossil fuels. This tax increase is only \$0.0714 per gallon per month (with an additional increment of \$0.0714 per gallon each month), and a tax credit will be initially be provided for those making less than \$50,000 a year (because I am a benevolent dictator). The tax credit in the early years will be high enough to offset the impact on the average consumer's life. However, given that you know prices are going to be increasing, there is a tremendous incentive to begin conserving. Our ultimate objective is sustainability.

The money raised from this tax will be funneled into public transportation, alternative fuel research, conservation incentives, and the development of walkable communities. Proposals will be reviewed by a panel of scientists and engineers from the appropriate disciplines in academia and industry. Suggestions from the public are welcome, and will be considered based on technical merit. (No cars that run on water, though).

So, that would be the cornerstone of my energy policy. What are your suggestions? What are some alternatives to this? Or do you believe the market will provide, and such steps are unnecessary?



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