



MANHATTAN INSTITUTE FOR POLICY RESEARCH

## Press Release

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# Wind Energy's Absurd Carbon Promise

**New York, NY:** For years, “clean” energy advocates have claimed that wind energy will drastically reduce U.S. CO2 emissions. In 2008, the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL), an arm of the U.S. Department of Energy, issued a report that said the United States could produce 20 percent of its electricity from wind by 2030.

A new Manhattan Institute Center for Energy Policy and the Environment issue brief, “The High Cost of Wind Energy as a Carbon-Dioxide Reduction Method,” authored by senior fellow Robert Bryce, finds that wind energy’s ability to reduce CO2 is so insignificant and so expensive that it proves an impractical government policy.

Bryce concludes:

- To get 20 percent of our electricity from wind by 2030, **it will cost U.S. taxpayers \$850 billion while cutting global emissions a mere 2 percent.**
- To meet the “20 by ‘30” goal would require the United States to install an additional 320,000 megawatts of wind-generation capacity costing **\$777.6 billion, or about \$44.7 billion every year for the next 19 years.**
- To justify a total investment of \$850 billion in wind, U.S. policymakers would have to agree that reducing carbon dioxide in the year 2030 is worth spending \$1,030 per ton. **This would impose a \$54 per ton carbon tax on electricity consumers—far greater than any tax currently in place.**

Wind energy is not a cost-effective method of reducing carbon-dioxide emissions. Any effort to dramatically increase our usage will result in new taxes on electricity consumers. Ultimately, if we assume that the installation of massive amounts of new wind capacity poses no health risks, and creates no conflicts with rural landowners, the costs of attempting to achieve the “20 by ‘30” goal will be staggering and unrealistic.

**Robert Bryce** is a senior fellow at the Manhattan Institute's Center for Energy Policy and the Environment. He has been writing about energy for two decades. *The Wall Street Journal* called his fourth book, *Power Hungry: The Myths of "Green" Energy and the Real Fuels of the Future* (PublicAffairs) precisely the kind of journalism we need to hold truth to power." He received his B.F.A. from the University of Texas at Austin in 1986.

**To obtain a copy of the report, please contact Matthew J. Olsen at 646-839-3352  
or by email at [molsen@manhattan-institute.org](mailto:molsen@manhattan-institute.org).**

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