

# Vibe at energy meeting different

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RE: THE JULY 2 Journal article “Heated debate flares over future of NM energy agenda.”

I attended the energy summit referred to in the article, and I perceive it differently than the staff writer. In my opinion the writer should have been more probative. For example, he could have asked a sign holder, “Why do you think coal saves \$0?” Taking pictures is easy. Serious journalism requires reportage.

The meeting was publicly announced and open to registrants. Query forms at each table allowed the audience to interact with speakers and panelists. There was no “debate” as suggested in the article caption; evidently radical environmentalists worry that facts will expose their prevarications. To wit, here are seven inconvenient truths:

1. Closing the coal-fired San Juan power plants would increase energy bills by at least 15 percent.

2. In 2006, China surpassed the U.S. in CO<sub>2</sub> production.

3. Dirtier air is the only thing sure about the war on coal. It pushes plants to India and China where regulation is nil and pollution reigns. The U.S. hasn’t had a new coal plant in years; China and India build four per week. Where will they get the coal? U.S. coal exports in March 2013 were the highest in history.

4. Over the decade from 1998 to 2008, 1998 was the warmest year and 2008 was the coldest year; hardly a global warming trend.

5. Damaging storms are declining, not increasing. U.S. hurricanes have not increased in number or intensity since 1900. Damaging tornadoes have decreased since 1950.

6. Those hurt most by restrictive energy policies are the poor. Those with incomes of \$30,000 or less spend 23 percent of their after tax income on household energy and gasoline, compared to 7 percent for those with incomes of \$50,000.

7. Atmospheric haze generally refers to phenomena that reduce visibility. The so-called “haze” that the EPA wants to regulate at the San Juan power plants is not even visible to the naked eye.

Kudos to Carla Sonntag and the New Mexico Business Coalition for organizing the energy summit and openly inviting those with opposing views.

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