



February 22, 2010

Alert: The Global Warming Bill is Still Alive

The headline in Friday's Milwaukee Journal Sentinel read: "*Doyle's global warming measure hits roadblock,*" leading some observers to think so much opposition had developed to the bill (AB 649/SB 450) that it is all but finished for this session. My assessment is less optimistic, and I think celebration is premature.

Let's take a look at some of the comments from those quoted in Friday's article:

- Senate Majority Leader Russ Decker (D-Weston): "*I think the bill is going to need some retooling.*"
- Rep. Jim Soletski (D-Green Bay), one of the bill's co-authors, said amendments are expected from both houses and that he wants to focus on keeping the 25% renewable electricity standard.
- An aide to Governor Jim Doyle said the Governor has always been aware the Legislature would tweak his proposal.

Does it sound like any of these people are really giving up on the bill? Not to me. I am expecting either a smaller version of the global warming bill will be introduced or we will see individual bills that will include some of the more aggressive provisions of the original bill.

In any case, I believe supporters of the original bill will try to get some of the more expensive and economically damaging provisions of the original bill enacted into law before the regular session ends on April 22nd. For example, they may let you buy any kind of TV you want as long as by 2030 new homes and commercial buildings are not allowed to draw power from the electric grid and are required to produce all their energy from their own renewable sources on site. Or, they may decide to let you have whatever kind of clock radio you want, as long as they get the 25% renewable portfolio standard that Representative Soletski mentioned.

It should be pointed out that the renewable portfolio standard would probably be the most damaging economic provision of the entire bill as far as electric rates are concerned. Wisconsin already has a law in effect that mandates that by 2015 our state will obtain 10% of our electricity from renewables (nuclear does not count as a renewable). This mandate already appears to be producing upward pressure on our electric rates, even though we are only at about 5% now. Think about what 25% would do to our electric rates, and the effect this would have on manufacturers!

So now is NOT the time to let your guard down. I will continue to monitor developments in the coming days and weeks and keep you informed. Let's keep the pressure on the Democrats in the Legislature and let them know they can't sneak something into law that will hurt Wisconsin's

economy and force everyone to pay dramatically higher prices for energy, all in the name of questionable science and for something that will produce no benefit to Wisconsin's climate or anyone else's.

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