

The Most Important Environmental Legislation EVER!

BY RICHARD GREENE

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Senators Bill Nelson, Menendez and Lautenberg may have introduced the most important environmental legislative ever. A great reason, of course, for Alaska Senator Lisa Murkowski to object to its passage by consent. "The Big Oil Bailout Prevention Act" is the beginning of the end for dirty energy and the beginning of the beginning of economic viability for clean energy. What it will do is raise the liability cap for economic and environmental disasters caused by oil company negligence from \$75 million to \$10 billion.

Why there is a cap in the first place is insanity. Why American taxpayers would ever have to pay one penny to clean up the mess created by private companies who are FAR more solvent than the American government makes no sense. (By the way, BP made \$5.5 Billion in profit last quarter, had 2009 revenues of \$239 Billion and is currently valued at \$181 Billion.) And in a more perfect world where corporate campaign donations are no longer a factor, it's just basic manners and basic economics for companies to clean up after themselves and bear the full burden of all of their activities.

But the earth shaking significance of the Nelson-Menendez-Lautenberg bill is that it is a kind of beginning in the acknowledgment that energy companies MUST pay for at least something approaching the real cost, the "True Cost" of their products, including the "negative externalities".

This is, indeed, a slippery slope ... to economic Nirvana!

First we get consensus that ridiculously wealthy, private, for-profit companies must pay for all of the damage of their oil

spills and negligence. Then, if we're lucky, we incorporate the \$120 Billion per year in health related costs, as assessed in 2009 by The National Academy of Sciences. Then, because we'll be on some sort of "Honest Accounting" roll, we add in the \$Trillions we spend on our military operations and bases in Iraq and elsewhere to protect global oil supplies and then, when we get really smart, we factor in the present day value of the monstrous future costs of global climate change.

And then the Nirvana part kicks in as everyone realizes that clean, renewable energy like hydrogen, solar, wind, geothermal, tidal and bio fuels like hemp and algae are already MUCH cheaper. Now! Today!

And in this Nirvana world, instead of oil gushing from a defective well 5,000 feet under the surface of the ocean, abundant funds gush in from investors around the world, driving the costs of clean energy far below the true (or even the subsidized) costs of the dirty stuff.

No more need to lift liability caps and no more need for Big Oil Bailout Prevention Acts because solar panels, windmills and hemp and algae farms don't trap men in dusty mines and don't have rigs that kill men when they explode and don't spew their refuse all over pristine wetlands.

Clean energy companies don't need bailouts. They just need a true Free Market that makes manufacturers carry their own weight and a Free Market that properly prices all of the externalities. Senators Nelson, Menendez and Lautenberg are the real Free Marketers here and anyone who opposes this bill and insists on the continued use of taxpayer funds to insure and subsidize private corporations, can only be described as a "Corporate Socialist." ●

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Richard Greene is a former Air America national talk show host and has been talking about "True Cost Factoring," "Honest Accounting" and "Silent Taxation" since he ran for United States Congress in 1992. His talk show, "Hollywood CLOUT!" is heard daily at 8PM central in Chicago on WCPT FM and in New York on WWRL 1600AM.

Greene is an attorney, political and communication strategist, author of the Prentice Hall coffee table book, "Words That Shook The World: 100 Years of Unforgettable Speeches and Events" and is the Founder of a 501(c)(3) corporation that runs high school competitions to find and cultivate the next generation of great speakers and leaders in America.

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For 25 years Greene has taught Presidents, Prime Ministers, U.S. Senators, Governors, CEOs, Royalty (Princess Diana), Actors and others, in 26 countries around the world how to give presentations and speeches with comfort and "Authentic Passion."

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