

# Opinion: EPA is gambling with U.S. economy

By Marita Noon

Folks who stop at a slot machine in the Las Vegas airport between flights can usually risk the few dollars that will probably disappear, but the serious gambler—whether the stock market, the ponies, or cards—assesses the risk before they cash in their chips. Even then, they make miscalculations. That's why they call it gambling.

Last week, Fred Krupp of the Environmental Defense Fund miscounted his cards when he claimed that new EPA regulations will “protect the IQ of countless of American kids and help clear the air for millions of Americans with asthma.” Citing the Mercury and Air Toxics Standards the EPA rolled out on Dec. 21, that he said was 21 years in the making, his widely-published op-ed said that the US “has always had good sense when taking on hazardous substances in our environment.”

The first card Krupp lays down in support of his argument that the US has “good sense” is DDT (dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane)—which the Environmental Defense Fund's (EDF) co-founder, Victor Yannacone, was instrumental in banning back in 1972. Using DDT as an example of “good sense,” Krupp says it was banned “after learning that the pesticide was killing birds of prey.” Even though the EDF sprang up in the late sixties with the single purpose of battling the use of DDT, it is surprising that he is still trying this old trick.

Since DDT was used in WWII to successfully control typhus and malaria, it has gone from winner to loser and back to winner again. In 1948, Dr. Paul Muller, the scientist who discovered the insecticidal properties of DDT, was awarded the Nobel

Peace Prize for his work. The tables turned when Rachel Carson wrote "Silent Spring" in 1962 and referenced experiments done that claimed DDT thinned birds' eggshells. Ultimately, through the work of EDF, DDT was banned in 1972. Because of that decision, malaria has spread, and millions have died from it. Instead of eliminating the disease's vector, the mosquito, drugs have been developed to treat the disease, and those drugs are now proving ineffective, as malaria has grown resistant to them.

Since then, additional studies have been done and the eggshell findings have been revisited. DDT wasn't the problem it was once believed to be. In 2006, the World Health Organization declared that, DDT "will once again play a major role in its efforts to fight the disease." DDT kills the mosquitoes that spread the disease.

The world gambled on what seemed to be a sure thing—but it turned out to be just hysteria and propaganda. Millions have died from the bad bet.

In recent history, we've collectively bet on "sure things" and lost.

We once believed there was an energy shortage—but modern technology and resource expansion have created a global oil glut, and natural gas is so plentiful that it is currently priced at a two-year low. America is now a net exporter of fuel.

Renewable energy was a sure thing. Presidents Bush and Obama threw taxpayer dollars at it—but it hasn't paid off. Solyndra (and others) have gone bankrupt, taking taxpayer dollars with them. First Solar was the single worst performer in the SPX in 2011. Biofuel production has fallen off while the production of traditional fuels is up.

The planet was said to be warming. It was thought to be a crisis. But before a global agreement could be signed to fix

the problem, new studies were done, and data was found to be falsified. The cooking of the books became known as “climate-gate.” The earth began to cool on its own—warming and cooling as it has done for billions of years.

Now we may have “mercury-gate.” The EPA and the environmental groups pushing for the “21 years in the making” Mercury and Air Toxics Standards have not looked at all the data, and data that they have looked at is used selectively to draw the desired conclusions.

Krupp claims that current levels of mercury (a naturally occurring element) will damage the IQ of “countless American children,” leaving the reader with mental pictures of rooms full of special needs children. When, in fact, their study shows the estimated total IQ points lost nationwide to mercury contamination of fish consumed by humans is 510.8 IQ points (see ES-5, Table ES-3 “Estimated IQ benefits from HG reduction”). That’s not per person (or child). That’s not per state; it is the total national benefit: 511 (let’s be generous) IQ points saved at an estimated annual cost of \$9.6 billion. So, nationwide, 500 children might lose one IQ point, or 1,000 might lose a half a point.

Similar to the tactics used to push the climate-change agenda, the EPA has once again selected data to support its predetermined outcome—they’ve then launched an advertising campaign to sell the expensive plan to the public. In his analysis of the EPA’s study, Dr. Willie Soon says: “It ignored well-documented, respected, and readily available research that conflicted with its apparently predetermined outcome and agenda.”

To read Krupp’s op-ed, you’d believe that implementing the EPA’s findings—which will cause some coal-fueled power plants to be mothballed and raise energy costs for consumers and industry—will eliminate all mercury from the environment. According to the Soon study, this is not true. He says:

“America’s coal-fired electrical generating units are responsible for approximately 0.5% of mercury found in the air Americans breathe. Even eliminating every milligram of this mercury will not affect or reduce the other 99.5 percent in America’s atmosphere.” Major sources include forest fires and volcanoes.

Once again, Americans are being forced to make a bad bet. The EPA would like us to spend \$9.6 billion (that is billion with a “B”) for a proposed saving in healthcare costs of \$6 million (that is million with an “M”) and it doesn’t add up – especially when considering the conflicting data. Even an amateur gambler wouldn’t make that bet. The odds are against you.

When the first card Krupp played was pulled from his sleeve, there is no reason to trust anything else he says. With an annual salary of nearly half a million dollars, Fred Krupp can afford to gamble, but the US cannot. The EPA is on a binge, gambling with the heart of the US economy and making our citizens the losers.

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