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STRIKING THE ENERGY-ENVIRONMENTAL BALANCE

Views expressed are personal, not on behalf of Senate

BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

- Institute's Mission
 - Address the ways in which the foundations and principles of morality are, can, and should be integrated into free-market capitalism
 - Liberal arts education in accord with, and based upon, traditional Ignatian values
- My personal history
- This forum
 - *Interactive* and public
 - Inviting *civil debate*, and *diverse opinions* (e.g. JAPOT; SIFE)
- A goal: explore the balance of energy and environmental laws/policies as a “case study”

ENERGY-ENVIRONMENTAL BALANCE?

- Energy is good but complex
- Environmental regulation is necessary and positive but can be burdensome
- Benefits and costs of both energy and environmental regulation must be balanced
 - Goal: Increase benefits for human welfare, including material prosperity; reduce costs
 - This is the “energy-environmental balance”

FIRST PRINCIPLES/CONTEXT

- “Morality”
 - Gratitude/Reverence
 - Who am I; where have I come from; where am I headed?
 - Prudence
 - First Things First
 - Primacy of the human in the natural world;
 - Value of each human life from conception to natural death
 - Earth as our inheritance
 - Personal virtue and humility
 - Property rights and social obligations
 - Search for What is True/Truth
 - Justice = balance

FIRST PRINCIPLES/CONTEXT

- Man is created to praise, reverence, and serve God our Lord, and by this means to save his soul.
- And the other things on the face of the earth are created for man and that they may help him in prosecuting the end for which he is created.
- From this it follows that man is to use them as much as they help him on to his end, and ought to rid himself of them so far as they hinder him as to it. . . . *St. Ignatius Loyola c. 1530*

ENERGY IS GOOD

- Provides the basis for advanced civilization and improved standards of living.
- Allows us to live comfortably in climates that would otherwise be too hot or too cold.
- Permits us to transport ourselves and cargo around our neighborhood or around the world.
- Enables us to produce food in the quantities necessary to feed the world's population, manufacture and communicate.

ENERGY IS COMPLEX

✘ Energy Production and Use

- + Intense skill, care, and heightened competence
- + Vast resources – human, natural and capital
- + Highly specialized legal and technical arrangements
- + Careful balancing of rights and obligations
- + Inherent challenges, e.g., inefficiency
- + Risks of harm to people and the environment

ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATION: NECESSARY & POSITIVE

- ✘ Relatively new
 - + “Modern era” in U.S., 1970
 - + Still “cleaning up”
- ✘ Effective
 - + Air and water cleaner than before
 - + Economy
- ✘ Popular
 - + Although people are concerned about costs

ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATION: CAN BE BURDENSOME

- ✘ Imposes Costs
- ✘ Adds Delay
- ✘ Can Discourage Investment
- ✘ Can Enflame Passions
- ✘ Can Twist Law
- ✘ Can Impede Environmental Progress

EXAMPLES IN CURRENT CONTROVERSIES

- EPA Mercury and Air Toxics Standards & Reliability and Affordability of Electricity
- Federal Permitting & North American Oil and Gas Production
 - Keystone Pipeline
 - Alaska Oil Development
 - “Fracking”
- “New energy” & Subsidies
- Property Rights & EPA CWA Enforcement

RESOLUTION FRAMEWORK

- Appeal to reason to establish First Principles
- Integrate morality ever more into free market capitalism
 - Proceed from personal virtue
- Rigorously test factual assertions
- Establish facts
- Work for negotiated solutions
- Make incremental reforms
 - Don't let the perfect be the enemy of the good

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