

Letter to the Editor
Carroll County REMC
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Dear Editor:

As Congress continues to address climate change, we're starting to hear a wide range of estimates on what the actions of lawmakers will cost American consumers.

The Congressional Budget Office, a non-partisan arm of Congress that prepares fiscal estimates and budgets, claims the increase in energy costs will be about the same as a postage stamp a day for the average homeowner. Other estimates are much higher—which makes me worry.

I don't know about you, but when the U.S. Postal Service released its Forever stamps, I breathed a sigh of relief. A Forever stamp guarantees I can buy a stamp today and not worry about adding extra postage when mailing rates rise, as they continue to do. I'd like to have a similar cost guarantee for any climate change goals Congress considers.

Don't get me wrong—I don't want electricity bills going up at all, even if the cost is equivalent to a stamp a day. At Carroll County REMC we're committed to keeping your rates as low and affordable as possible. But if Congress believes climate change legislation won't increase your rates by more than a postage stamp a day, they should put measures into place to protect that promise.

If the U.S. Senate approves a cap-and-trade system as part of a climate change bill—something the U.S. House did this summer—we need to make sure there's a cap on the bill itself, a limit to how much electricity prices can rise. We need our own version of a Forever stamp for cap-and-trade costs—a guarantee from Congress that electricity prices won't rise beyond the reach of the average American household.

How can we do this? Policy experts say there's a tool to fix this potential problem—an economic safety valve. A safety valve would keep prices from rising above the level Congress expects, effectively promising consumers access to affordable power in the future.

Congress believes climate change legislation will cost you a stamp a day. But we can't just sit back and see if those estimates pan out. Access to affordable electricity is critical for all of us. If an economic safety valve helps keep electric bills affordable for consumers, Congress should adopt it. Join the Our Energy, Our Future™ grassroots awareness campaign at www.ourenergy.coop and tell Congress to put a cap on cap-and-trade.

Sincerely,
Randy W. Price
CEO