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Comment from Brad Brown,

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General Comment

I strongly support extensive review of the change to royalties, and exploring the costs of getting it wrong. The coal companies already pay out a lot of money to the country - that is at risk under the scenarios being discussed. I also highly recommend the article by WY State Rep. Norine Kasperick in The Hill, April 7, 2015.

<http://thehill.com/blogs/congress-blog/energy-environment/237994-reinventing-the-carbon-tax>

As I wrote to her yesterday, I've been watching for a response like this. At a low level [royalties] seemed a fight over money more money. But [she] identifies the reality opponents of coal mining will never be happy until they can stop coal mining. Hitting coal businesses with additional costs and especially uncertainty will do that.

I don't want to do away with my job, or the states or nations energy bounty, but coal use will decline. I wish there was more discussion about the costs of changes, and the timeline we can expect. How much can conservation really accomplish? How many windmills to replace a coal-fired plant? What's the net cost of that power? And how to get the power from the windy places to the cities with any reliability? The activists aren't interested in the truth or the logic, but we should be.

The fight over royalties will certainly hurt coal and the nation's economy. With no readily available alternatives to coal at the scale at risk, and no smart discussion of real alternative energy timelines or costs, we are setting the country up for failure.