



# Louisville CAN!

Louisville Climate Action Network  
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In his recent Forum essay, E.On CEO Vic Staffieri deserves credit for acknowledging the reality of climate change.

Though his message was misleading and self-serving, we agree that the “political and social climate change” developing over atmospheric climate change “could dramatically affect . . . every Kentuckian.” However, Mr. Staffieri omitted “inconvenient” facts:

The Clean Air Act mandates reductions in pollutants that threaten public health. Recently, the EPA announced its decision to regulate greenhouse gas (GHG) pollution.

Within UN-sponsored treaty negotiations this December, the US is expected to commit to substantial GHG reductions.

These inevitabilities mean that burning coal will cost more, especially if Congress adopts a market-based “cap and trade” approach to cutting GHGs.

As Staffieri noted, Kentucky is currently 90+% dependent on coal, the dirtiest source of electricity.

(If thinking investors wouldn’t put nearly all of their assets into one investment, why not expect utilities to diversify their energy portfolios?)

Kentuckians will pay disproportionately—unless we seize the many proven opportunities for cutting demand.

Energy efficiency (E2) is the cheapest, fastest and cleanest energy “source.”

Think of the local jobs that we’d create, money we’d save and pollution we’d avoid by weatherizing and insulating buildings, and manufacturing and installing efficient appliances, furnaces and air conditioners.

Kentucky has dozens of dams that don't generate electricity. We applaud E.On's upgrades to its Falls of the Ohio hydro-plant, but why not add turbines to its empty bays?

We receive more sunshine than Germany—the world's solar energy leader. German-owned E.On embraces solar energy there; why not here?

Think of the local jobs that we'd create, money we'd save and pollution we'd avoid by retrofitting dams, and building and installing solar water heaters and electricity-producing photovoltaics.

Staffieri's claim that renewables are "considerably more expensive" contradicts LG&E testimony before the Public Service Commission that installing hydro-electric plants at existing dams would've cost slightly more than expanding its coal-fired Trimble plant—without cap-and-trade.

Kentucky's utilities receive tax credits for building coal-fired plants, and for every pound of coal burned. End subsidies and cap GHGs, and renewables would more than compete.

The Obama Administration proposes to sell GHG allowances and give most of that revenue back to customers—who could keep paying higher bills or invest in E2 and renewables.

Instead of clinging to the past, we call upon E.On to truly lead in solving the climate crisis. Time is short.

*Sarah Lynn Cunningham is an engineer, and the director of the Louisville Climate Action Network, which currently includes 23 businesses, churches, educational organizations and community groups. For more information, please visit [www.louisvillecan.org](http://www.louisvillecan.org)*