

#141 Doing Our Fair Share

We hold the opinion of ourselves as being fair, reasonably intelligent and responsive to crisis and the needs of others. From Copenhagen comes a different message.

The best scientists in the world agree that the Polar Cap of ice that has been a source of fascination for everyone of us since we were small children will disappear in less than one decade. Pollution from the dirty and inefficient fuels and mechanical devices we use makes the first decade of the 21st century the warmest in the history of climate data. The second warmest decade was the 1990s. Current destruction of economies living in the highest risk areas of the world from climate change amounts to \$195,000,000,000. That figure would be several trillion if it were not happening in countries where costs in US\$ are very low. Yet, the United States representatives, in secret session with a few other so-called developed countries, has produced a document completely outside of the official documents prepared for many months by countries from all parts of the world, that again exempts us from the world majority opinion on what is necessary to avoid accelerating levels of global catastrophe. The decision to spend additional hundreds of billions on warfare against a few on the foreign land of one of the poorest countries on the planet is matched by an equally striking lack of commitment to the security of the environment and people here at home and abroad.

I have taken the time to review this international saga because it seems easier to catalog in clear detail the huge failure to be fair, reasonably intelligent, responsive to crisis and the needs of others using distant examples. The same disconnect with the real world occurs daily in our lives and region. From every corner of the world, visitors to Sullivan County could tell us how they are being injured by the way we get and use energy and how much they still hope we will become more intelligent, responsive and do our fair share in stopping the destruction of habitat, humanity and health.

Means to this end are readily available. Energy efficiency, for example, can save half of US oil and gas consumption at about a fifth of the current price of these energy sources, and 75% of US electricity consumption at about one eighth of its price.

Once we use energy in a way that saves money, important synergies emerge between energy efficiency and renewable energy. Every 70 minutes, the sun supplies Earth with enough energy to run the planet for a year. Every square meter receives each year as much energy from the sun as is in a barrel of oil and it arrives reliably and freely. This means currently available 20 % efficient solar panels on rooftops in 1% of the land area of dense cities, would provide the world's entire electricity needs 20 times over.

Sullivan Weatherization and Energy Efficiency Project seeks to rapidly ramp up the efficiency and renewable energy production of our buildings which consume 72% of our largely dirty fossil fuel electricity and emit 40% of the green house gases that cost us so terribly in health and wallet. SWEEP is intended to be a locally financed, staffed and resourced sustainable economic development project that can deliver our fair share contribution to creating a safer and more healthy future. Within the county, there is a billion dollar market. We can develop this transformative industry as soon as we make the commitment. It will not happen without the support and participation of thousands of people in Sullivan County.

For more information, wait one week and then go to www.SASDOnline@gmail.com.

