



Growing Distrust in the Utility Regulatory Process

One Ray Gifford, a former Chairman of the Colorado Public Utilities Commission, has written an opinion piece deploring attacks by green pressure groups on the regulatory system.

We see the whole utility monopoly-regulatory system as illegitimate, tyrannical, providing protection for wasteful companies, crony-driven and fully deserving of criticism and undermining.

While we would rather see the attacks coming from a free-market prospective, we rejoice that at least someone is questioning the sleazy institution.

Ex-Commissioner Gifford says, “New self-styled watchdog groups have switched to smear campaigns featuring full-throttle assaults on the integrity of public utility commissioners that can only be dubbed ‘green McCarthyism.’”

Gifford complains that one group has charged that “Utilities nationwide have captured Public Utility Commissions, in whole or in part.” Sounds about right to us.

The regulatory whiner asserts: “Campaigns aimed at discrediting regulators and denigrating the process are unfair and unwelcome. For decades, the regulatory process has survived – not without warts, but with general success. Nobody condones corruption or supports unethical behavior that games the regulatory system.” Brother Gifford obviously never heard of the Georgia PSC where such practices are rampant.

This defender of institutionalized regulatory corruption says vituperative language degrades the deliberative process. The process of providing a cover for utility abuse should be degraded.

Until the whole system of utility regulation is abolished we hope it will come under increasing attacks.

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