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Best Cleaning
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Martin Cleaning Service

**Carpet & Upholstery
Cleaning
Residential &
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Minimum Service CHG.
\$45.00

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charge may be applied

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**2 Cleaning Areas or
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Pre-Spray Traffic Areas
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1 Cleaning Area (only)
\$40.00

Includes Pre-Spray Traffic Area
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Area/Oriental Rugs:
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Area/Oriental Rugs (Wool):
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Heavily Soiled Area:
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OPINION

TIP OF THE ICEBERG



When Polluters Lose and the Rest of Us Win

The good thing about regulations

BY JILL RICHARDSON

As the Trump regime's anti-environment onslaught begins, there are several terms used by men (and in the case of Trump's cabinet, it's nearly all men) attempting to turn us against protecting the air we breathe and water we drink.

Polluting industries become "job creators," and the policies that allow them to pollute are "pragmatic," "balanced," and "common sense." Meanwhile, the rules put in place to keep Americans safe and our environment clean become "government abuse" or "overreach."

These are buzzwords, developed by polluting industries and their political allies, to convince us to let them keep trashing our planet.

Another favorite, already uttered by Trump's new head of the Environmental Protection Agency, Scott Pruitt, is "picking winners and losers." Any time the

government attempts to rollback pollution, fossil-friendly politicians trot this phrase out.

Generously speaking, they mean this: New environmental rules allow some corporations to keep doing business profitably (the "winners"), while requiring others to make costly renovations or even shut down (the "losers").

Sounds unfair, right?

Only, the "winners" are the responsible companies

and the "losers" are the companies that pollute.

Suppose the military drops a supplier making expensive, faulty weapons and instead gives its business to a company making equipment the military actually needs. Most of us wouldn't criticize the government for dropping the dead-weight supplier.

Why should we apply different standards to environmental safety? Do we, the American people, have a responsibility to breathe

polluted air and suffer the resulting illnesses in order to keep a polluting industry in business?

Of course not. Especially when the industry in question could have upgraded to cleaner equipment but refused to do so, in or-

der to save money for themselves while sickening us.

Let's re-frame the idea of picking winners and losers.

When the government allows companies to profit by polluting, they're also picking winners and losers. The winners are companies that don't have to invest in cleaner technologies, and the losers are the American people, who get sick from breathing dirty air.

No matter what the government does, whether it regulates or not, somebody wins and somebody loses. The only important question is who comes out on which side.

Oh, and a word about "job creators," too. Drug cartels employ all kinds of people. That doesn't mean what they're doing is good for the rest of us.

Do we want policies that allow irresponsible corporations to win while the American people lose? Instead, I'd propose an ultimatum for dirty industries: Clean up your act or go out of business.

For ordinary Americans and responsible businesses, that sounds like a win-win to me.

OtherWords columnist Jill Richardson is the author of *Recipe for America: Why Our Food System Is Broken and What We Can Do to Fix It*.

