

Economists question Bush's prescription for lower gas prices

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP) — The link between ending a 40-year oil export ban and lower prices at the gas pump is not as direct as Republican presidential candidate Jeb Bush would have voters believe in his new energy proposal, industry economists said Tuesday.

Still, Bush's overall premise that lifting the ban would expand economic growth held up to independent scrutiny. Environmentalists said the negative impact on the planet would be too great.

Eliminating the export ban, enacted in the 1970s, is the key piece of Bush's proposal, first published in a paper online Tuesday and later discussed by the candidate.

"We should sell that to the world for national security purposes, for lower prices for us and for greater high-wage jobs in this country," Bush told more than 200 supporters and employees of Rice Energy, a small independent company outside Pittsburgh.

Bush cited studies suggesting a drop of 6 cents per gallon over time, while independent economic forecasting firms suggested a decline of 8 cents.

However, oil is a global commodity and U.S. production has little to do with overall pricing. Presidents have even less power over prices.

"They all begin with the flaw that you can relate the price of oil on the high seas to what Mr. and Mrs. Smith pay at the pump," said Tom Kloza of the independent Oil Price Information Service.

What is clearer is that oil companies would benefit immediately, said Michael Noel, an oil economist for Texas Tech University.

"If the ban was lifted today, tomorrow they could start shipping the stuff,"

Noel said. "A change in the price in the U.S. is more difficult to gauge."

That's because the crude oil pumping from U.S. wells at a faster rate over the last decade has been a lighter-weight oil, while U.S. refineries are built for heavier oil, such as what is imported from the Middle East and elsewhere. Lighter oil produced in the United States more often must be refined overseas, Noel said.

Democratic and environmental groups complained Tuesday that Bush was bowing to pressure from the oil industry, though he made his announcement at a family-owned natural gas startup less than a decade old. Critics also say the plan is a boon to the petroleum industry, would provide little benefit to consumers and would prolong U.S. reliance on fossil fuels linked to global warming.

"This plan promises voters the world, but the truth is that the world is exactly what it would sacrifice to fatten the wallets of dirty energy conglomerates," Sierra Club political director Khalid Pitts said in a statement.

In his pitch, Bush cited studies suggesting a likely increase in energy-related manufacturing and higher salaries related to the jobs created. The independent economic forecasting group IHS reached a similar conclusion.

"Ending the crude oil export ban would benefit the entire economy," IHS's Jeff Marn said. The group estimated that the move would generate 394,000 jobs annually and \$86 billion more per year in the nation's gross domestic product, on average, from 2016 to 2030. The increased economic activity would add \$1.3 trillion to cumulative government revenues during that period, Marn said.

CREDITS: Resignation letter did not provide reason for departure

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energy projects who opted to sell their tax credits received nearly the full face value.

However, Buckley told tax credit recipients and brokers in 2014 they could ignore the formula, according to public records and interviews. At the same time, other employees at the department told tax credit recipients they had to follow state price guidelines.

Buckley's resignation letter did not provide a reason for his departure, but he heaped praise on the agency. "I cannot say enough great things about ODOE, about all the people I've encountered in my years of service here, and especially about you and

all the others on the management team," Buckley wrote in a letter to agency director Michael Kaplan.

Two employees who work in the division Buckley oversees, loan manager Paul Zollner and business energy incentive program specialist Nakeia Daniels, also recently resigned. An assistant in the agency's administrative division, Mandee Wilding, resigned around the same time.

Another employee in the energy incentives division who handled energy tax credit sales, Joe Colello, resigned in August. Colello was one of the employees who told brokers and tax credit recipients they had to follow state

price regulations.

Zollner also did not provide a reason for his resignation, in a letter to Buckley.

"I appreciate the opportunities I have been given while at energy," Zollner wrote in a Sept. 24 letter released by the agency.

State auditors who were investigating a complaint about the energy department's handling of the tax credits this summer heard that employee morale was low and turnover was high, according to the auditors' notes from interviews with two agency employees. According to the agency's statistics, turnover was at 32 percent during the 2009-2011 biennium, 50 percent during the 2011-13

biennium and 37 percent in the 2013-15 biennium.

Agency spokeswoman Rachel Wray said that since the department is small, some employees leave in order to advance their careers.

"We're proud that many of our employees have gotten the kind of professional experience at ODOE that makes them great candidates for jobs with more responsibility," Wray wrote in an email on Monday. "As for program operations, we've been working to improve these programs and our oversight of them, and it's our intention to make the programs strong and reliable enough to withstand dynamic situations like staff turnover."

WOLVES: Killed 8 of Bingham's sheep on consecutive nights last Sept.

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The department, which hasn't authorized killing any wolves since two in 2011, turned him down. In a Sept. 25 letter to Bingham, ODFW wildlife biologist Mark Kirsch said non-lethal measures had worked since the last attack in late August.

"We are sorry your experience with Oregon's forest lands has been problematic this year," Kirsch concluded in his letter to Bingham. "It is our hope you complete your grazing season with no further loss."

Department officials also noted Bingham would be removing his sheep from the area in October under the terms of his seasonal grazing permit in the Umatilla National Forest.

Department spokeswoman Michelle Dennehy said the Mount Emily pack now is frequenting the central and southern part of their known range area, and the sheep are in the northeastern edge. Three of the pack members wear radio collars that allow biologists to track their movements.

Bingham is furious, and said ODFW officials are dishonest and "two-faced politicians."

"It's unfortunate I trusted them," he said by text to the *Capital Press*. "The only interest to them is that the wolves eat the economy of Eastern Oregon."

Bingham said he's been patient and followed Oregon's rules in the face of repeated losses to wolves over the past two years. He estimates he has lost more than 100 ewes. One guard dog was killed this year. In 2014 two were injured and another disappeared and is presumed dead.

"We have not harmed any wolves but we are not in the business of sacrificing assets to feed (ODFW's) pet dogs," Bingham said by text. ODFW investigates



Courtesy of Jeremy Bingham

One of four herd guard dogs reportedly killed by wolves in the Umatilla National Forest. Producer Jeremy Bingham asked state wildlife officials to kill wolves but was turned down despite qualifying sheep and dog losses.

reported livestock attacks but follows a strict protocol that includes examining wounds and measuring bite marks and tracks before confirming wolves were responsible. ODFW depredation reports do not correspond to Bingham's claimed losses. He said he didn't report many attacks; other producers have repeatedly said livestock often disappear in wolf country. They suspect wolves kill many more cattle and sheep than are confirmed in depredation reports.

Bingham is general manager of Utopia Land and

Livestock, a family company based in Burley, Idaho. He grazes sheep in Idaho, and for the past three seasons held a grazing permit in the Umatilla National Forest in Oregon as well. The permit allowed him to graze 2,000 ewes and lambs for a little over four months. He must remove them from public land Oct. 9.

The Mount Emily pack, which at the end of 2014 was thought to consist of seven wolves, has been a problem.

In September 2014 wolves attacked Bingham's sheep on consecutive nights, killing

a total of eight sheep and injuring two of five guard dogs; a third dog was missing, according to the initial ODFW report. The incident was the first time herd dogs were attacked in Oregon, the department said at the time.

Bingham said he has taken steps to fend off wolves. He hired a herder who is with the sheep 24 hours a day, placed five to seven guard dogs with each sheep band, penned sheep at night on occasion and deployed alarm lights and a siren that is activated by a wolf's radio collar. He said a federal Wildlife Services agent voluntarily sat with the herd overnight several times.

Bingham said Wildlife Services and the U.S. Forest Service, which administers the grazing allotment, have been "incredible" agencies to work with. He said ODFW led him to believe there was recourse for the wolf attacks but now won't do what's allowed under the state plan. He said allowing wolves to kill multiple sheep is "just training pups to be chronic depredators." He predicted elk and antelope populations will decline due to wolves and said attacks on humans will happen.

"ODFW has an agenda and it is only about politics, not science," Bingham said.

FUGITIVE: Second victim escaped after a day and reported the men to police

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September 2006 and was convicted the following year of kidnapping, rape, sodomy, sexual abuse and sexual penetration with a foreign object. The 61-year-old is serving a 108-year prison sentence at Two Rivers Correctional Institution, Umatilla.

The first victim was 20 in September 1988 when she was kidnapped after agreeing to perform a \$30 sex act on Roberts in his pickup, according to details from the older brother's trial. She said Roberts kept her in a locked closet when she wasn't chained to a bed. She was sexually abused for a week and forced to call him "Master X."

The second victim was pulled off the streets in June 1990, when she was 17.

After a day as a sex slave, she escaped her handcuffs, jumped through a window and reported the men to police.

One of Jackson's alleged victims, Michaelle Dierich, spoke to the *East Oregonian* in July 2014 about the ordeal and her desire to keep the case alive and bring Jackson to justice.

Foot Notes - Hammertoes

Contracted, buckled toes are sometimes called claw toe, mallet toe or hammertoes. These toe deformities can occur on any of the toes but the second toe is the most common. Hammertoes can be caused by the result of a bunion, which slants the big toe under the second toe, thus pushing the toe up and making it virtually useless.

Some contracted toes are the result of muscle imbalances, birth defects, arthritis or due to ill-fitting shoes. Sometimes a painful corn can result on the top of the hammertoe, where it is rubbing shoes. Or, a callous can develop on the ball of the foot.

Several treatment options are available. For immediate relief, the corn or callous can be reduced. Dr. Clarke and Dr. Hampton offer extra

depth shoes with a display in their office. These shoes allow more room for buckled toes with a deeper toe box area. Surgery can be done to modify and straighten the toe. This will eliminate the painful corn or callous.

Surgery, shoes, surgery, shoes...the decision should not be too difficult, but it is to some people. You should see Dr. Clarke or Dr. Hampton if your hammertoes are a problem. Ultimately, to be pain-free and comfortable, your feet need to last a lifetime. You might as well take care of them.



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