



Written by [Alex Newman](#) on April 28, 2010

EPA Offers Cash for Propaganda

The Environmental Protection Agency is offering thousands of taxpayer dollars and free publicity to whoever produces the most compelling pro-government-regulation propaganda, it announced on its website and in a YouTube video.

“Almost every aspect of our lives is touched by federal regulations,” the contest announcement correctly points out. “Even before you leave the house in the morning, government regulations help set the price of the coffee you drink, the voltage of electricity your alarm clock uses, and the types of programming allowed on the morning news.”



But rather than point out the total lack of constitutional authority for said rules — or the growing regulation-induced economic burden shouldered by struggling American families and businesses — the EPA is bribing citizens and legal residents to create propaganda promoting the “importance” of the thousands of arbitrary edicts spewed forth by Leviathan’s myriad bureaucracies.

“Create a short video, not to exceed 90 seconds in length, explaining why rules are important” urges the EPA’s online announcement. Additionally, the video should discuss “why the average American should care about federal regulations.” Presumably, a threat of jail time or [over a trillion](#) dollars in wasted “compliance” costs are not the reasons being sought for why people should care. To be eligible for the prize, the entry must also direct viewers to www.regulations.gov, a federal website which touts itself as “your online source for U.S. government regulations from nearly 300 federal agencies.”

According to the EPA’s website, the “E-Rulemaking Program” and the agency’s ‘Office of Regulatory and Policy Management’ will award \$2,500 to the contest winner and “post his or her video on Regulations.gov as well as the EPA Web site.” The best propaganda piece will be selected by a panel of representatives from multiple federal agencies using criteria such as creativity, quality, “accuracy,” and how effectively it “promotes greater awareness about federal rulemaking and encourages viewers to participate in the process.” All entries must be submitted by May 17.

Ironically, whoever wins will undoubtedly be forced to deal with some of their beloved government regulations. As explained in the [contest rules](#): “Entrants should note that there may be tax liabilities associated with winning a cash prize. The entrant is responsible for satisfying all such tax liabilities in accordance with applicable federal and state tax laws and regulations.” The federal IRS code consists of about 50,000 pages. And since neither Treasury Secretary Timothy “TurboTax” Geithner (in charge of the Internal Revenue Service) or Representative Charlie Rangel (who chaired the congressional committee which writes the tax rules) could figure out the code, best of luck to the contest winner in sorting it out.

But all kidding aside, instead of paying for propaganda to promote government regulations, perhaps the money would be better spent reducing the massive economic drag already caused by bureaucratic



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regulations. In a report entitled “Ten Thousand Commandments: An Annual Snapshot of the Federal Regulatory State,” the non-partisan Competitive Enterprise Institute revealed that “federal regulations cost a whopping \$1.187 trillion last year in compliance burdens on Americans.”

Or perhaps the EPA could use the money to sort out its own house. As reported on [JBS.org](#) (an affiliate of *The New American*): Earlier this month, the agency’s “Energy Star” labeling program was exposed as a fraud when government auditors released a scathing report detailing the ease with which they succeeded in having 15 bogus products certified. The “energy-efficient” gimmicks included a gasoline-powered alarm clock, a “room air cleaner” consisting of a space heater with a feather duster and fly strips attached, and other similar absurdities — all “manufactured” by fake companies.

But, the best idea by far would be to cancel the contest and abolish the whole agency. Congress does not possess the constitutional authority (detailed in [Article I, Section 8](#) of the U.S. Constitution) to create such a bureaucracy, let alone empower it to waste taxpayer money on propaganda contests. Therefore, the Constitution’s [Tenth Amendment](#) specifically prohibits such powers.

But even worse than the propaganda contest, despite the obvious constitutional problems and bipartisan congressional opposition, the EPA is still moving forward with [plans](#) to regulate carbon dioxide, the gas exhaled by human beings and [required for plant life](#). It is past time for Congress to fulfill its obligations to the supreme law of the land. It should promptly rein in this out-of-control agency, lest Americans be further saddled with more economy-destroying, unconstitutional regulations. Being forced to pay for the propaganda convincing them of the rules’ alleged “importance” only adds insult to injury.



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