

✘ [Read the whole thing](#). Really. Because if you don't, and all you do is read the subtitle — *How the Senate and the White House missed their best chance to deal with climate change* — or just read the tag line — “Everybody is going to be thinking about whether Barack Obama was the James Buchanan of climate change” — then you will get a totally distorted view of the piece.

The article makes it abundantly clear that from the start, only a miracle could have gotten comprehensive climate change legislation through the Senate, perhaps the world's Most Dysfunctional Legislative Body. Here's the money quote, regarding the efforts to get Lindsey Graham (R-SC) on board:

Back in Washington, Graham warned Lieberman and Kerry that they needed to get as far as they could in negotiating the bill “before Fox News got wind of the fact that this was a serious process,” one of the people involved in the negotiations said. “He would say, ‘The second they focus on us, it's gonna be all cap-and-tax all the time, and it's gonna become just a disaster for me on the airwaves. We have to move this along as quickly as possible.’ ”

Move a bill transforming the US economy quickly and quietly through the Senate so that Fox News doesn't realize it's a serious process? [John McEnroe has the only real response to that](#). If that's the only way that we'll get a real climate bill through the Senate, then the answer is that we're not going to get a climate bill through the Senate.

The article discusses some major tactical errors by the White House, and notes that Obama basically washed his hands of the thing by this part spring, but the line about James Buchanan — coming from an unnamed environmental lobbyist — is really just a cheap shot, not to mention completely inaccurate. If the energy companies secede from the Union, then come talk to me. Although at times it suggests weakly that had Obama invested the kind of effort on climate that he had on health care, he could have gotten a bill, even the author (Ryan Lizza) doesn't really seem to believe it.

Instead, the article teaches quite clearly that if the US is going to do something about climate, it will come:

1. Through states and localities;
2. Through the courts, under the public nuisance lawsuits; and
3. Through the EPA regulating emissions.

Only once that process starts in earnest will there be any chance for Congress to move. And with the results of the November elections looking bad for the Democrats, it might not even move then.