In a recent conversation, a Berkeley climate scientist compared geoengineering to chemo: you may find out it's your only choice, but it would be better not to get cancer in the first place. Likewise, we might need geoengineering, but it would be better if we didn't pump the atmosphere full of carbon.

Nevertheless, it's important to know our options. Today's Washington Post has a useful article that describes the current state of play:

> "We're getting a sense that agencies are interested in this topic and would be open, on a certain level, to letting this program go forward," said Jane Long, who co-chairs the National Commission on Energy Policy's task force.
>
> At this point, though, even the experts most seriously looking at climate engineering describe it as a last resort for when climate impacts become a serious threat and the world has yet to wean itself off fossil fuels.
>
> "Geoengineering only makes sense – if it makes sense, and that's an important conditional – as a way to bridge this crisis period," said Steven Hamburg, the Environmental Defense Fund's chief scientist.

Rep. Bob Inglis, a retiring member of Congress has another apart metaphor for geoengineering: "Investing in research is like investing in better brake linings, when taking your foot off the accelerator would do just as well." What this analogy aptly captures is that if you keep pushing on the accelerator and your foot ever slips off the brake — if the geoengineering ever falters — climate change leaps ahead at racetrack speed.