

Some movie franchises last way too long: Friday the 13th, Rocky, Nightmare on Elm Street. Each new film is worse than the last, and they're all worse than the original, which wasn't so great itself. The GOP war on energy=efficient light bulbs has the same characteristic — you wish someone would just drive a stake through its heart and kill it. Only in America could a political party make wasting energy a core element of its core creed.

This year's version was just announced, according to [Greenwire](#):

Rep. Michael Burgess (R-Texas) is continuing his efforts to block federal mandates for efficient lighting with a bill he reintroduced yesterday that would bar the government from requiring compact fluorescent light bulbs to be installed in certain health care facilities.

Burgess' bill, H.R. 643, would prevent any federal or state mandate to install energy-efficient lighting from requiring the use of any bulbs that contain mercury in a "hospital, school, day care center, mental health facility, or nursing home." The bill is identical to H.R. 739, which Burgess introduced in the previous session of Congress.

OK, here's a list of what's wrong with this law:

- It increases health care and education costs by raising the facility's power bills.
- It's based on a specious health concern, which is if anything more specious in health care facilities where clean up is likely to be efficient.
- At the margins, it increases air pollution (again by raising power demand).
- It increases carbon emissions and thereby climate change.
- It wastes money and resources to generate unneeded electrical power.
- It lacks even the "freedom of consumer choice" rationale since the purchasers aren't consumers.
- American lighting manufacturers are against it.
- It tramples on the rights of states that choose to regulate in the matter (what happened to the tea party's constitutional scruples about the federal leviathan?).
- All of these institutions have old-fashioned fluorescent lights, which pose the same problem but more so.
- It also invades state's rights by forbidding states from telling their own public

schools and public hospitals what to buy.

Seriously — is *this* what our national legislature has descended to? Maybe Rocky XX should feature Sylvester Stallone duking it out with the Democrats in Congress. Although it seems more like the hundredth sequel of some horror movie.