

In his State of the Union address, President Barack Obama called natural gas “the bridge fuel that can power our economy with less of the carbon pollution that causes climate change.” President Obama went on to say that his administration will continue to work with the natural gas industry to increase both production and related job growth. This elicited pro and con comments from readers.

— Editor

## Agree that Natural Gas Is the ‘Bridge Fuel’ for U.S.

President Obama is spot-on in saying natural gas is transforming the transportation industry. Natural gas is primarily sourced right here in the good ole USA; it is cleaner burning than all traditional petroleum fuels, with a much lower carbon count. However, we need more stations to make compressed natural gas (CNG) work as a universal fuel for both fleets and the general public and CNG stations are not cheap! The City of Columbus recognizes

this fact as we have already built two stations with an additional two on the drawing board. The City of Columbus has already generated significant fuel savings in both 2012/2013 and anticipates that, by 2020, we will be saving over \$2 million per year, more than offsetting the incremental costs of a dedicated CNG unit and, most certainly, the cost of a CNG station.

This “bridge fuel” referenced by our President pencils all day long, especially with larger fleets. One doesn’t have to be an economist to understand the benefits of CNG. One small hiccup, though — the dreaded fracking issue. While fracking has been used for decades to extract both oil and natural gas from the ground, there are certainly environmental issues regarding the same. Fracking is not a new process as it has gone on for decades extracting fuels from the ground; however, it is local, with local jobs, local investment, and local economic benefits that impact real people. That is a good thing. I do agree that both federal and state regulatory issues need to be addressed, bringing big business into regulatory compliance impacting environmental issues such as waste water disposal and the cleanliness of our water from the process. By using CNG, we eliminate our dependency on foreign oil and that is a good thing.

I do not see hypocrisy in President Obama’s solution-oriented thinking. The City of Columbus is part of the solution. Are you? However, I do realize there are many who wish to settle for the status quo — a do-nothing sort of mindset, This is too bad for our country! Do something, even if it is wrong, but, for goodness sake, do something or suffer the continued consequences of unstable fuel prices, unstable fueling supplies, foreign political unrest, filthy carbon emissions with the potential to increase sickness in our children and grandchildren — all the while being lulled into a state of nirvana-like do-nothingness! Not me.

The City of Columbus has decided to be part of “the bridge” CNG solution, as have many members of the Fortune 500 who think it is the way to go. Many of them fuel their vehicles at the City of Columbus CNG stations, such as AT&T, Frito-Lay, Jay-Rail, Home City Ice, Food Liner, and Waste Management. These companies recognize that their CNG vehicles contribute to a cleaner environment, lower fuel costs, and greater earnings to their businesses (not to mention your mutual funds). This also results in lower expenses to our taxpayers. The use of CNG also makes us good stewards of our environment. All of this together, folks, make CNG a home run!

**Kelly Reagan**  
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## Disagree on Whether Natural Gas is ‘Bridge Fuel’ for U.S.

While I enjoyed most all of President Obama’s vision, I could not agree with his answers to natural gas as our bridge fuel of the future. While I’m certain it is better than oil or coal, it is not even close to the available EV or hydrogen technology, which is much more viable for the future. I wouldn’t mind natural gas if the fracking process did not poison our drinking water. This is really bothersome and not news to the industry. I do not like hypocrisy from either party, surely our president knows of the problems, so why does he endorse natural gas as an answer? Everything else was good in his speech, and I believe we are on the correct path excepting energy polices.

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