

Tree-hugging liberals must know something about economics

- **Devin Rokyta/Moscow-Pullman Daily News**

If California were a nation, it would have the sixth largest economy in the world - even though its government is dominated by liberal tree-huggers.

It turns out that going green doesn't equal a death sentence for the economy, despite what some would tell us.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, California's GDP in 2015 was \$2.5 trillion, up 4.1 percent from a year earlier. The U.S. economy as a whole grew 2.4 percent.

The state did it while staying on track in meeting its goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels by 2020. Now it has even grander plans. Last week, Gov. Jerry Brown extended and expanded California's climate change law and set a goal of reducing emissions 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030.

As California demonstrated, we know we can decrease emissions while growing the economy. The state has set the sort of example we should expect out of our federal government, which is unfortunately dominated by a group of climate change deniers in the House and Senate.

Even though some will try to find a way, the lack of progress at the national level and on the world stage certainly can't be pinned on President Barack Obama, who earlier this month sidestepped Congress and - along with Chinese President Xi Jinping - committed to the Paris climate change agreement. The goal of the agreement is to hold the increase in the global average temperature to below 2 degrees C above pre-industrial levels. Obama has committed the U.S. to cutting its emissions between 26 percent and 28 percent compared with 2005 levels by 2025. China has agreed its emissions will reach their peak by 2030.

It could all be undone rather quickly, especially considering that in 2017 the White House could be the set of the new reality TV show "Trump does D.C." The theme of the show: Kill any progress made under the Obama administration.

Unfortunately, the political games aren't needed. The science has been proven, and we can curb the problem without destroying the economy.