

• Would you want a terrorist living in your neighborhood? In Berkeley, Calif., this is considered a difficult question. A resolution before the city council proposed inviting two released Guantanamo detainees to settle in the city, which "has a longstanding policy in support of peace and justice, including previously welcoming refugees from other countries who unjustly suffered imprisonment, torture and related traumatic experiences." One member, who makes up the council's tiny sensible caucus, voted against the measure; four were in favor, but the other four abstained, leaving it one vote short of a majority. We sympathize with the abstainers, who confronted a difficult choice—do something manifestly deranged, or face deranged voters' wrath—and resolved it in classic Obamaesque fashion. The abstainers can always tell their constituents that they hesitated out of fear that the detainees would not be radical enough for Berkeley.

Incredibly, the Environmental Protection Agency has long refused to conduct an analysis of the affects of its rulings on jobs and the economy. So two senators want to make EPA do this. **The Comprehensive Assessment of Regulations on the Economy Act**, introduced last week by Republican Senators **Jim Inhofe** (Okla.) and **Mike Johanns** (Neb.), would require EPA, in conjunction with other relevant federal agencies, to determine the **total cost of the rulings** it is preparing to issue. "This bill is about **transparency**," said Inhofe. "The public needs to know the **full cost of these rules** when they fill up at the pump and flip the light switch. It will also help guide and inform Congress as it decides how to deal with the **unprecedented barrage of rules coming out of EPA.**"

Deficit-Size Egos

The desire politicians feel to create monuments associated with their names has been in the DNA of politicians since the pharaohs of Egypt built the Pyramids of Giza. In the U.S., however, you don't have to be a pharaoh to get something named after you. For decades Washington politicians have been shamelessly, scandalously bestowing their names on buildings, bridges, train stations and God knows what else. The late Senator Robert Byrd (D-WVa.) had at least 30 such "monuments" dedicated to himself—all at taxpayer expense. But he had plenty of company.

In my home state of New Jersey, near a certain exit on the turnpike, you

can behold the Frank R. Lautenberg Rail Station, named after the Garden State's still-sitting Democratic senator. The now disgraced Representative Charles Rangel (D-N.Y.) had the Center for Public Service dedicated to himself. When the late Senator Ted Stevens (R-Alaska) would go home to visit constituents, he could savor the



The only monument the late Senator Byrd didn't put in West Virginia.

Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport. Senator Tom Harkin (D-Iowa) took pride in the "Harkin Wellness Grants" program, which provided your money to ostensibly improve public health. Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) once slipped in taxpayer money to fund the "Mitch McConnell Conservation Fund." After much effort Congressman Michael McCaul (R-Tex.) succeeded in getting an amendment passed a few years ago that banned such "Monuments to Me" for Veterans Affairs or military construction projects. He is pushing legislation this year that would stop the practice altogether: No more Monuments to Me for sitting members of the House or Senate. It's one thing to get a building named after you if you put up the dough or to get vanity license plates when you pay a premium—it's your own money. But there's no reason to stoke the vanity of Washington's pharaonic pygmies with your money. And, no surprise, Monuments to Me have also been used to grease the passage of bloated appropriations bills that have put our national finances in a frightening mess.



"If you're serious about becoming enlightened, you'll have to open your mouth and shut your eyes."