U.S. steel industry is strong

The American steel industry is a global leader in clean steel production. As such, I take issue with the premise of the Jan. 31 news article "Zero-emission steel is within reach, but the goal may require a drop in production of the alloy." The article was based solely on a report out of Japan and did not reflect — nor accurately represent — the American steel industry's decarbonization activities. There are several balanced studies that more accurately reflect the American industry's work in this area.

For example, the article noted that the global steel industry contributes 7 to 9 percent of total greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. However, the American steel industry makes up only 1 to 2 percent of total U.S. GHG emissions.

Also, the American steel industry has adopted electric arc furnace (EAF) technology — which uses steel scrap combined with direct reduced iron to make new steel — at a more accelerated rate than the global industry. Nearly 71 percent of the steel produced in the United States in 2020 was from EAFs, compared with 26 percent globally. In addition, integrated steel mills in the United States are almost entirely fed by domestically sourced iron ore pellets (compared with carbon-intensive sintered ore used more widely outside the United States). And the American steel industry relies on natural gas and renewable energy, which help to produce steel with the lowest carbon emissions intensity.
The United States is a leader in scrap consumption as a share of steel production. The industry has substantial ferrous scrap supplies and is increasingly investing in scrap assets. These significant points should be considered in future reporting on this topic.

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