Success at Town Meetings for Carbon Cash-Back!

This month 24 New Hampshire towns passed a resolution to support carbon pricing (carbon cash-back) legislation while 10 towns failed to pass it, some by just a few votes. A message supporting carbon pricing will now be sent to our state legislators, Governor Sununu, congressional delegation, and President Trump from those 24 towns. The Carbon Cash-Back Coalition reports that ten more towns have yet to vote on it and people are working on presenting it to city councils as well.

We are creating the political will for our elected officials to support this widely acclaimed method for reducing carbon emissions in our environment. This policy would improve the health of millions of people, be good for families’ pocketbooks and help create clean energy jobs for the future. It’s good for families because the money that’s collected from the polluting industries would be rebated to all of us on an equal basis. Two-thirds of us will get more money back than we see for price increases.

A bill has been introduced in Congress that now has 80 co-sponsors. In the NH House a similar bill has actually passed out of committee but has been tabled in the House. After towns have finished voting it is hoped that the bill will be brought up for a vote, once legislators realize it has the support of thousands of people around the state. Some details about the proposed state bill, HB 735: the first year fossil fuel extractors (or fuel importers) would be charged $20/ton of carbon emissions. People would get an estimated $300/year (or $25/month if they prefer). Every year both numbers would go up until we have reached our goal of emissions reduction.

In the meantime we can act as if there is already a carbon price. Look at ways to make your house more energy efficient, perhaps get an audit done. When it’s time to replace appliances look for ones that are energy efficient. When you’re ready to buy a car, consider ones that are fuel efficient or even hybrid/electric. How do you heat your home? You might benefit from a heat pump instead of an oil furnace.

Decisions like these will be clearer when there is a price on carbon. Next year the Carbon Cash-Back Coalition plans to continue its efforts to bring the resolution to every town in New Hampshire. You can help by learning more about the policy and by collecting signatures to get it on the warrant. Many towns, like ours, only need 25 signatures and a lot of ours came from circulating the petition at our church coffee hour. If you want more information or if you’d like to volunteer, go to carboncashback.org.

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