

Letter: An emissions-free future is within reach

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Cabell Brand's commentary ("Summon the courage to confront climate change," July 20) urged us to muster the courage to address climate change. However he didn't say exactly what readers could do.

I suggest they join their local chapter of Citizens' Climate Lobby, a volunteer organization building the political will for legislation to stabilize the climate. CCL's proposal is a national carbon tax, paid by fossil fuel producers, collected by the government and fully rebated to households. Such a tax would correct fossil fuel pricing, effectively charging for the damage caused by emissions. Rebating the tax would shield us from increasing energy prices and help us purchase energy-efficient vehicles and appliances. The tax also would spur utility companies to choose emissions-free energy.

Why is this good? We already have the technology to provide virtually all our energy needs without generating emissions.

Sound impossible? Stanford's Professor Mark Jacobson mapped out how to provide America's energy needs (transportation, electricity, heat) by 2050 using existing technologies (especially solar, wind and hydro) and using no fossil fuels. Jacobson suggested plans for each state, itemizing numbers of turbines and solar panels and land required, with a cost-benefit analysis.

A sustainable climate and sustainable economy are not incompatible.

Let's just do it!

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http://www.roanoke.com/opinion/letter-an-emissions-free-future-is-within-reach/article_8fea82a1-cc78-5fa9-9cfe-654c3e8674c2.html