

'Carbon tax' a good way to help climate

Editor:

Thank you for publishing Stephen Danna's informative article about the need to lower our carbon dioxide emissions to slow climate change. He didn't mention the best way to motivate everyone — businesses and individuals alike — to lower emissions is by charging fossil fuel companies for the carbon dioxide emissions their products cause.

Then the revenues collected should be rebated to the public.

Higher prices for fossil fuels will push everyone to be more energy efficient or to switch to renewable energy. And rebating the revenues to the public will help protect middle- and lower-income consumers from price increases.

Meanwhile, charging for harmful emissions will signal to private investors fossil fuel industry profits are going to be lower, so investors will choose to invest more in other energy sources thus generating a greater supply of cheap clean energy.

If Congress passes this type of "carbon tax" on fossil fuel companies, they can also add border adjustments on all imports from countries that do not charge a carbon tax for emissions. This is the most efficient and effective way for Congress to encourage worldwide cooperation in the battle against climate change.

It may be no surprise that owners of major fossil fuel reserves, such as Koch Industries, vehemently oppose the idea of a carbon tax and are doing all they can to prevent its enactment, because they fear it will prevent them from profiting from their reserves. However, responsible fossil fuel businesses, including Shell Oil, BP, ConocoPhillips, and Exxon-Mobil agree Congress must address climate change, and the best course of action would be a market-based price for emissions.

Readers should please urge U.S. Rep. Bill Owens to support a "carbon tax" on fossil fuel producers with a "carbon rebate" for consumers as the best way to fight climate change.

JUDY WEISS

Brookline, Mass.

http://poststar.com/news/opinion/mailbag/letters/article_5272cace-c9ca-11e3-8bf5-0019bb2963f4.html