

TO THE EDITOR: Climate change group encourages carbon tax

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To the Editor: Thank you for Anne Runkle's article on local Democrats supporting President Obama's climate plan. However, (it was disheartening to see that) DTE Energy, owner of one of the largest U.S. sources of power plant pollution, objects to additional EPA regulations for coal plants and Sierra Club coal plant campaigns ostensibly because these efforts hurt their consumers financially.

Really? Has DTE factored into their analysis the cost to consumers of increasing food prices due to droughts and heat waves? Or the costs of higher health costs due to asthma, lyme disease and other illnesses linked to climate change? Or lost income from severe weather power failures? Or the cost to taxpayers when the federal government fights wildfires or cleans up after hurricanes?

Has DTE noticed its efforts to reduce pollution do not reduce emissions in Asia? But there are policies that would reduce local emissions, protect consumers and impact Asia.

A revenue-neutral carbon tax would reduce our emissions and rebate tax revenues to consumers (allaying DTE's financial impact concerns). With border adjustments on imports from countries lacking comparable carbon taxes, a U.S. carbon tax could push international emissions reductions.

Moreover, nationally, many Republicans support revenue-neutral carbon taxes using the free market to address climate change without increasing government revenues (for example, Greg Mankiw, Art Laffer, George Schultz and Bob Inglis). Readers should please encourage local Republican leaders to express concern about climate change and support for a revenue-neutral carbon tax.

Judy Weiss

Brookline, Mass.

Citizens Climate Lobby

<http://www.thenewsherald.com/articles/2014/01/15/opinion/doc52d553f203ca9616208472.txt>