

Hoping UMass Dartmouth climate change summit translates into action

Posted Dec. 9, 2015 at 4:15 PM

I appreciate Mike Lawrence's summary of flooding issues discussed at the UMass Dartmouth climate summit. I was delighted that UMass held a climate summit, and that lobbyists approach U.S. Rep. William Keating for even limited action legislation to clean up our cleaning products.

I particularly valued Keating's comments emphasizing that the U.S. is moving backwards on climate change.

However, I would like to make a suggestion to future climate conference organizers, environmental lobbyists and all members of Massachusetts' Congressional delegation: It's not enough to say we're moving backward, or we need to plan for floods, or we should stop particular pipelines or we should settle for inadequate baby steps.

Every statement, every report, every call for a protest march, every summit session — as important as these all are for educating the public and creating political will — should all start and end with statements asserting the need for carbon pricing.

Many of these other actions will turn out to be futile, if the U.S. fails to price carbon emissions.

As a model, I recommend language used by Ted McIntyre of MassClimateAction in his weekly podcasts: "Because we recognize the necessity of personal accountability for our actions, because we accept responsibility for building a durable future and because we believe it is our patriotic duty as citizens to speak out, we must insist that the United States put a price on carbon."

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