

How the AG can help protect ratepayers

Thank you for publishing the article about Attorney General Maura Healey ("AG links energy, environment in new bureau," March 13). It reminded me of the Bee Gees "How a love so right can turn out to be so wrong?" Healy was so right to explain that we are currently paying a virtual carbon tax — every time we miss work due to an extreme weather event, or deal with flood damage, we are paying for carbon pollution and climate change; our lost wages or flood repairs are a virtual tax. I loved Healy's clear concise explanation. But then she didn't take the next step urging state legislators to enact a real carbon tax to reduce emissions and eliminate the virtual tax. The best thing Healy could do for ratepayers is explain how a carbon tax with rebates works and shields the public from price increases.

Instead she supports the building of more natural gas pipelines, and she wants ratepayers to pay the costs. How can she turn out to be so wrong? As our use of natural gas levels off, it isn't the time to build more pipelines.

If more ratepayers opt for wind, install solar panels or join a solar community farm, we won't need more natural gas to stabilize our rates. Healy can protect ratepayers by helping make sure that other New England states also make fixed rate wind contracts available to ratepayers, and shielding both wind and solar users from having to pay for the installation costs of new pipelines.

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