

# Legislature shouldn't wait for Congress

Marc Breslow and Juliette Rooney-Varga, in an op-ed article, explained two carbon tax bills in our statehouse. I hope our Legislature passes a well-debated version of one of these bills. Breslow and Rooney-Varga also noted that neighboring states Connecticut, Rhode Island and New York are working on carbon tax legislation. I hope this activity encourages our Legislature to enact a carbon tax this session.

Readers should note that last year carbon tax bills were in our statehouse, but they weren't enacted either because constituents didn't make enough noise, or the Legislature still hoped that Congress would enact a national carbon tax, or paid lobbyists obstructed our legislative process.

Last year ExxonMobil paid nearly \$50,000 to a lobbyist to oppose our enactment of a carbon tax. When Exxon was asked why they lobbied against our carbon tax despite proclamations that they support carbon taxes, they replied that they only support national carbon taxes, and they don't want to be encumbered by different state laws.

That's quite a catch-22 they've established: Congress won't enact a carbon tax; sometimes legislation that doesn't progress nationally can be enacted in a state, and after state success, it's enacted nationally; but Exxon opposes state level carbon taxes.

For a corporation that supports carbon taxation, they're making it pretty impossible.

Our Legislature should tell Exxon that we welcome their suggestions to improve our legislation, but not their opposition and interference.

And voters should make lots of noise in support of state carbon tax legislation.

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