

National Grid should push solar, not natural gas generation

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Tim Horan, the president of National Grid in Rhode Island, rightly asserts that we aren't doing enough on climate change, and "there is a strong sense of urgency to do more" ("R.I. must focus on climate change," Commentary, April 22).

Yet he advocates energy efficiency and installing more natural gas pipelines. These actions don't convey a sense of urgency. Utility endorsements for energy efficiency and more pipelines are tediously humdrum.

I would find Horan's approach more compelling if he were advocating against pipelines and for distributed solar instead. In fact, distributed solar can channel additional electricity into the grid within months, but pipelines take years to site, permit and build.

Horan's article would be fitting for Earth Day if he had firmly supported Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse's calls for carbon pricing legislation as the best way to address climate change urgency. In fact, Stanford University just released a poll indicating that two thirds of Americans would support carbon taxes if the proceeds would be rebated to the public. That's exciting.

Horan's article was neither exciting, educating nor electrifying.

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The writer is co-leader of the Boston Chapter of Citizens' Climate Lobby.

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