

# No more waiting, time to enact a state carbon tax

Your article “State lawmakers hear area concerns” (T&G 4/27) contained two statements that I really appreciated. First, you wrote: “Carbon pricing - or setting a carbon tax - was another idea favored by many in the audience.” I’m delighted that many in the audience support a state carbon tax. It’s clear that national carbon taxation is our best emissions reduction policy. Since Congress won’t enact one, Massachusetts should, in part to demonstrate that carbon taxes cut emissions effectively, while also allowing economic growth. Also, Massachusetts hasn’t cut emissions in transportation and building sectors, and a carbon tax can efficiently and fairly cut those emissions. In addition, Connecticut, Rhode Island, and New York are each working on state carbon tax bills, suggesting cross-border competition won’t be an issue.

Second, State Sen. Harriette Chandler (D-Worcester) told the audience: “What you have to say is very important ... we want to hear from you. We are going to set the (legislative) agenda based on what we hear.” Legislators should listen, notice that many members of the audience support a state carbon tax, and heed constituents. Last year, Exxon hired a local lobbyist to stymie our efforts because Exxon doesn’t want separate state carbon taxes - they only support national carbon taxation. State legislators should tell Exxon that we’d appreciate their help enacting a state carbon tax that includes their preferred features as an example and impetus for Congress ... but the time for waiting for Congress to enact climate legislation is over.

Judy Weiss  
Brookline

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