

# **RABBI JUDY WEISS, Brookline: Our 'grave responsibilities' on climate change**

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Hingham state Rep. Garrett Bradley was criticized for filing a bill allowing a natural gas pipeline through western Massachusetts although western communities oppose the project, and although many of Bradley's constituents oppose other pipelines in his district, and Bay Staters in other districts oppose other pipelines ("Bradley takes heat for pipeline proposal," Aug. 19).

Maine environmentalists want their governor to stop looking for more natural gas from the south and to develop local renewable energy. Throughout the eastern United States, Americans oppose gas expansions, and yet Bradley filed this bill. Perhaps Bradley might consider Pope Francis' encyclical on climate change:

"We know that technology based on the use of highly polluting fossil fuels – especially coal, but also oil and, to a lesser degree, gas – needs to be progressively replaced without delay. Until greater progress is made in developing widely accessible sources of renewable energy, it is legitimate to choose the less harmful alternative or to find short-term solutions ... Politics and business have been slow to react in a way commensurate with the urgency of the challenges facing our world. ... Although the post-industrial period may well be remembered as one of the most irresponsible in history, nonetheless there is reason to hope that humanity at the dawn of the 21st century will be remembered for having generously shouldered its grave responsibilities."

Fossil fuels need to be replaced without delay. Some say natural gas is a "less harmful alternative," but recent reports of high methane leakage raise questions. Natural gas pipelines and infrastructure take years to permit and build; they aren't short term solutions. Trucking in liquid natural gas might be a short term solution. Programs to support efficiencies and local renewables are legitimate, short term solutions.

Here's hoping that all Bay Staters recognize our "grave responsibilities" and shoulder them reverently, because history will judge us, and our children will learn whether or not we dealt with their future "generously."

[LINK](#)