

Take climate change seriously

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Kudos to you for your terrific editorial calling on policy makers, CEOs and each of us, to address climate change (Our View: Time to take climate action," Dec. 30).

Of course, a national carbon tax will align our economic incentives with our moral and social justice objectives.

Also, I appreciated law professor Stephen Carter's humorous attempt to predict 2015 news on various topics, including climate change (National View: Climate Change cools, and other predictions," Jan. 2). However, one should be careful about combining humor with global warming. It's easy to joke about global warming in a way that just confuses the public when they don't get it's just a joke. Even the article's title uses unfortunate wording that could easily confuse people who don't realize it's just a joke.

Carter wrote a 2014 article for Bloomberg View that reveals he hasn't thought sufficiently about careful climate communications. While commenting on scientist Michael Mann's defamation lawsuit against climate change deniers (whom he mistakenly calls skeptics), Carter wrote: "A claim of fraud is unlike other efforts to debunk a scholar's work." Carter's choice of the word "debunk" in his serious article reveals his lack of understanding that scientists don't debunk each other's work. Scientists respectfully note errors, or carefully suggest revisions.

Scientists don't debunk science reports unless they are debunking the nonsense concocted by organized networks of conspirators who purposefully confuse the public with climate change denials. These folks aren't skeptics. They are organized deniers working to promote fossil fuel sales in the face of rising climate concerns.

As the tobacco industry found out, such activity is called racketeering. Racketeering isn't funny and defaming scientists is less funny.

I would hate it if one day, with global warming zipping past a tipping point, Carter had to say to a child or grandchild, "but it was just a joke, son, just a joke."

Rabbi Judy Weiss

Volunteer, Boston chapter of Citizens' Climate Lobby

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