

Environmental Leadership

Climate Collapse & The GND

The 2018 UN Climate Report has proven wildly optimistic. The degree of Arctic permafrost melt that was predicted in 2090 was observed in 2019. And it is newly estimated that 700 GigaTons of methane is trapped beneath the melting permafrost at the bottom, 100 foot depth, of the Arctic Ocean. The release of that much methane, by itself, would raise world temperatures in excess of 7 degrees C in a few years. That is off the charts in terms of food uncertainty and mass extinctions.

What must be done, which cannot be done while Trump is President, is the effective elimination of the fossil fuel industry. This begins with passing public funding of elections to reconnect the Congress to the people. Elimination of the Fossil Fuel sector cannot be achieved by negotiation with the Fossil Fuel Sector. It must be imposed by free Members in Congress representing us and our children.

We will pass the comprehensive Green New Deal developed by Bernie's team. It develops renewable energy and revolutionizes our food and farming system. It is a Marshall Plan level of effort – required around the world.

This must be complemented by a revenue neutral GreenHouse Gas (GHG) tax at an initial rate of \$200 per ton of CO₂e produced. The CO₂equivalent of a GHG species is its heat trapping potential expressed as a multiple of that of CO₂. It is important that this calculation be taken at the source. For example in fracking of 'clean burning natural gas' the co-generated methane dominates the CO₂e budget.

This tax applies market forces to speed the reduction in fossil fuel use. It is a revenue neutral tax in that all revenues are returned in UBI format, which to say an equal share to all people living in America. The Wall Street Journal of 17 January 2019 argues the economics more fully [1]

At mid June: We are wrestling with a Global Pandemic and the associated economic meltdown. The pandemic teaches us that we can dramatically curtail fossil use; that the reduction in pollutants is immediately observable; and that we can put out 4 Trillion dollars (4T\$) in zero interest loans on short notice. At the same time massive glorious Black Lives Matter protests sweep the nation, indeed the world, revealing the depths of Racial, Economic, and Judicial injustices. Through all this we must find a path to Climate Justice.

Florida Environmental Issues

I have taken an avid interest in politics since Reagan brought Austerity home and in the environment since the Ozone Hole was observed and Gore began Congressional hearings on the Climate Crisis. This was a private (family and friends) obsession with delight in the resolution of Ozone Depletion – and despair at the corporate dissimulation that provided Climate Denial talking points for the donor-owned members of Congress. I did not go public till 2015 – when Bernie opened the door to broader discussion. The environmental issues in CD3 and Florida that I have most loudly addressed include Phosphate mines (protests and testimony to Bradford, Union, & Alachua County Commissioners, Lobby Days in Tally), protests of south Florida devastation by 'Big Sugar', protests of fracking, Sabal Trail pipeline, Weyhauser land use proposals, and the Toll Roads for no one.

References

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 17, 2019

Economists' Statement on Carbon Dividends

Global climate change is a serious problem calling for immediate national action. Guided by sound economic principles, we are united in the following policy recommendations.

I. A carbon tax offers the most cost-effective lever to reduce carbon emissions at the scale and speed that is necessary. By correcting a well-known market failure, a carbon tax will send a powerful price signal that harnesses the invisible hand of the marketplace to steer economic actors towards a low-carbon future.

II. A carbon tax should increase every year until emissions reductions goals are met and be revenue neutral to avoid debates over the size of government. A consistently rising carbon price will encourage technological innovation and large-scale infrastructure development. It will also accelerate the diffusion of carbon-efficient goods and services.

III. A sufficiently robust and gradually rising carbon tax will replace the need

for various carbon regulations that are less efficient. Substituting a price signal for cumbersome regulations will promote economic growth and provide the regulatory certainty companies need for long-term investment in clean-energy alternatives.

IV. To prevent carbon leakage and to protect U.S. competitiveness, a border carbon adjustment system should be established. This system would enhance the competitiveness of American firms that are more energy-efficient than their global competitors. It would also create an incentive for other nations to adopt similar carbon pricing.

V. To maximize the fairness and political viability of a rising carbon tax, all the revenue should be returned directly to U.S. citizens through equal lump-sum rebates. The majority of American families, including the most vulnerable, will benefit financially by receiving more in "carbon dividends" than they pay in increased energy prices.

Original Co-Signatories Include (full list on reverse):

- 4** Former Chairs of the Federal Reserve (All)
- 27** Nobel Laureate Economists
- 15** Former Chairs of the Council of Economic Advisers
- 2** Former Secretaries of the U.S. Department of Treasury