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Statement by Massachusetts Campaign for a Clean Energy Future Regarding Carbon Emissions Increase

Boston, Mass. (May 16, 2016) - The [Massachusetts Campaign for a Clean Energy Future](#), a coalition of organizations supporting the implementation of carbon pricing in the Commonwealth, is calling on state legislators to pass a carbon fee and rebate proposal -- either as a separate bill or as part of an omnibus energy bill -- in the wake of reports that carbon dioxide emissions from the region's power plants rose in 2015 after years of decreases.

"Through the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2008, Massachusetts is mandated to cut carbon emissions to 25 percent below 1990 levels by 2020. These reports today provide further evidence that despite the progress we've made, we will not meet those mandates without stronger reforms. Implementing an effective carbon pricing policy through a fee and rebate system, which has proved effective in British Columbia, is an important piece of the puzzle," said Cindy Luppi, coordinator of the Massachusetts Campaign for a Clean Energy Future and New England director for Clean Water Action.

Two current proposals at the State House would create a common sense carbon pricing system in Massachusetts, similar to one that has worked well in British Columbia, where fuel consumption has decreased by 16 percent since 2008. One proposal, S. 1747, would charge fossil fuel importers a fee based on how much carbon dioxide pollution the fuels release when burned. The fees would go into a special fund for rebates and be passed on directly to households and employers in order to minimize any increased costs in living and doing business. Each resident would receive an equal rebate from the fund. Since low- and moderate-income households tend to use less energy than wealthier ones, on average they would come out ahead, but everyone would have an incentive to reduce their use of fossil fuel in order to pay less in fees. Businesses, nonprofit organizations, and municipalities would receive a dividend from the fund based on their share of the state's employment.

Another developing proposal – S. 1786 - follows a similar model but would invest a small portion of the funds in clean energy and public transportation. In both cases, Massachusetts would be implementing a policy that encourages residents and businesses to use less fossil fuel, thus reducing carbon emissions while helping the economy.

Last week, 40 members of the coalition were at the State House to let their legislators know that they support carbon pricing and to urge them to take action on the proposed legislation. Coalition members are confident that a carbon fee and rebate policy can be tailored to meet the needs of the Massachusetts economy.

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