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Statement by Massachusetts Campaign for a Clean Energy Future Regarding State House Hearing on Reducing Carbon Emissions

Boston, Mass. (May 31, 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 legislators to pass carbon pricing legislation to address recent reports that carbon emissions from the region’s power plants rose in 2015 after years of decreases, and that the state is not on track to meet its greenhouse gas reduction mandates.

A recent ruling by the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court upheld provisions of the Global Warming Solutions Act (GWSA) of 2008 that require limits for multiple emission sources to decline annually. The GWSA also mandates that the Commonwealth of Massachusetts cut carbon emissions to 25 percent below the 1990 level by 2020 and at least 80 percent below 1990 by 2050. A hearing held at the State House today examined ways that the Commonwealth could meet the emission reduction requirements set out by the 2008 law.

“We know that carbon emissions across New England are rising, which is why we called on state legislators to pass a carbon fee and rebate proposal, either as a separate bill or as part of an omnibus energy bill. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts will not meet the mandates of the Global Warming Solutions Act without stronger reforms. We should start with policies that we know are effective and will benefit most residents and businesses in Massachusetts. The carbon fee and rebate policy has been effective in both reducing fuel consumption and growing the clean energy sector in British Columbia and makes sense for the Commonwealth,” 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.

In May, 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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