



Media Contact:

Suzanne Morse

Ph: (617) 646-1020

smorse@oneilandassoc.com

Rebecca Morris

Ph: (617) 513-1080

rmorris@campaignforcleanenergyfuture.org

Statement by Massachusetts Campaign for a Clean Energy Future Regarding Carbon Pricing Amendment

Boston, Mass. (June 28, 2016) – The [Massachusetts Campaign for a Clean Energy Future](#), a coalition of organizations supporting the implementation of carbon pricing in the Commonwealth, is supporting Amendment 48 to S. 2372, the energy omnibus bill, sponsored by State Senator Michael Barrett (D-Lexington) that would implement economy-wide carbon pricing in Massachusetts.

“A recent report showed that Boston and the region face significant danger from climate change, and we also know that carbon dioxide emissions across New England are rising. The coalition supports including the carbon fee and rebate proposal as part the energy omnibus bill to address these concerns,” said Cindy Luppi, coordinator of the Massachusetts Campaign for a Clean Energy Future and New England director for Clean Water Action.

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 dioxide emissions to 25 percent below the 1990 level by 2020 and at least 80 percent below 1990 by 2050. Additionally, a recent report indicated that carbon emissions from the region’s power plants rose in 2015 after years of decreases.

“The carbon fee and rebate policy has helped to reduce fuel consumption and grow the clean energy sector in British Columbia and other places and will give the Commonwealth the biggest bang for our buck in meeting the Global Warming Solutions Act mandates. Most importantly, we believe it will help reduce carbon dioxide emissions and combat climate change,” said Marc Breslow, acting director of Climate XChange, a member of the coalition.

The amendment is based on two proposed bills that would create a common sense carbon pricing system in Massachusetts - S. 1747, which has 48 co-sponsors, and S.1786. The amendment requires the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs to establish a system of greenhouse gas emissions fees charged to fossil fuel importers. The revenues from those fees would go into a special dedicated fund for rebates, and be passed on directly to households and employers in order to minimize any increased costs in living and doing business.

Since low- and moderate-income households tend to use less energy than wealthier ones, if the rebate is an equal amount per person or per household, on average they would likely come out ahead, but everyone would have an incentive to reduce their use of fossil fuel in order to pay less in fees.

In passing this amendment, Massachusetts would be implementing a policy that encourages residents and businesses to use less fossil fuel, thus reducing carbon emissions while helping the economy. 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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