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Feb. 8, 2010

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## Hansen: ‘We have a planetary emergency’

**SAN DIEGO** – Leading climate scientist [Dr. James Hansen](#) over the weekend told concerned citizens across the nation, “We have a planetary emergency, and yet the public doesn’t understand that.”

More than 100 members and guests of [Citizens Climate Lobby](#) listened on Saturday to Hansen by [telephone conference](#). Hansen warned that unless our world transitions quickly from fossil fuels to clean energy within the next generation, the Earth will face disastrous consequences.

Hansen, a member of the National Academy of Sciences, on the Columbia University faculty, and Director of NASA’s Goddard Institute for Space Studies was one of the first scientists in the 1980s to warn about global warming caused by human activity. He recently published his first book, “Storms of My Grandchildren: The Truth About the Coming Climate Catastrophe and Our Last Chance to Save Humanity.” He spoke Saturday as a private citizen, not as a representative of NASA.

CCL volunteers came to hear Hansen in preparation for meetings with members of Congress during next month’s spring recess. At those meetings, constituents will press for legislation that will lower carbon emissions, create new jobs and reduce America’s reliance on foreign oil.

“We have to start listening to scientists like Dr. Hansen before it’s too late and we pass the tipping point on climate change,” said Marshall Saunders, founder and president of Citizens Climate Lobby. “But switching to clean power isn’t just good for the Earth’s climate. It’s also good for our country because it will lead to more jobs, healthier air, and energy independence.”

Hansen told volunteers on Saturday that the best way to speed the transition to clean energy is to place a gradually increasing fee on carbon, which will make green technology competitive with fossil fuels. Returning most of the revenue to all households would protect consumers from increased costs associated with the carbon fee.

Hansen said that the “fee-and-dividend” approach to pricing carbon would likely provide an economic stimulus, because most households would get more from the dividend than they would pay in higher energy costs.

“By the time the fee gets to a level of \$115 a ton of CO<sub>2</sub>... that would be \$670 billion in the United States. So, if you then distributed that as a dividend to all legal residents with each adult getting one share and children getting half a share up to two children per family, then that would be close to \$3,000 per year, or \$9,000 a year for a family with two or more children.”

Citizens Climate Lobby is a national grassroots advocacy organization dedicated to creating the political will for a sustainable climate.

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