

# Congress: Put a fee on carbon to curb climate change

Nearly all the scientific experts agree on the basics of climate change. The Earth is warming. Humans are doing it. It's already harming us and other species. If we continue burning fossil fuels at recent rates, it poses far more dangerous and significant risks for our children and grandchildren. We are approaching a dangerous threshold whereby, if it is crossed, the earth will simply take the controls out of our hands, and tropical forests, peat bogs, permafrost and the oceans will switch from absorbing carbon to releasing it.

We still have time to act—if we start in this decade. We know what to do. We have affordable, practical solutions that don't require great sacrifice. We can adopt a balanced approach. We can cut energy demand with efficiency innovations and some additional conservation, and we can scale up energy supplies with existing alternative technologies that don't burn carbon.

Our first step has to be a big one. We can act fast enough to avoid the worst impacts of global warming only if we put a federal fee on carbon-based fuels that reflects their true costs to society.

There is an emerging consensus among economists that the smartest approach is to enact a consumer-friendly carbon fee in the following way:

- **Goal.** Reduce 2005 emissions levels 80% by 2050. It's based on our best science, and adequate to do the job.
- **Start small, increase predictably.** Increase the fee slowly but steadily until we hit our emission goals. Businesses need predictable energy prices. The economy needs a smooth transition.
- **Easy to administer at home and to emulate abroad.** The fee is collected only once—at the first point of sale—the mine, wellhead or border crossing. We already collect sales taxes at these locations. It doesn't repeal, prevent or discourage any other private, state, regional, national or international strategies from reducing greenhouse gas emissions using other taxes, tradable permits, regulations or subsidies to alternative fuels. Also, it works in countries with diverse economies.
- **Revenue neutral.** All the fees are returned to citizens to mitigate the economic impact. Government keeps none of the funds.
- **Protects the vulnerable.** For most Americans, refunds match or exceed direct and indirect costs from rising energy prices.
- **Protects business** from unfair domestic and international competition using border taxes and credits.
- **Doesn't play favorites.** Lets markets and localities pick the winning technologies.

For the good of our nation, and to preserve a livable world for future generations, we urge our Representatives in Congress to enact this revenue-neutral fee on carbon.

**For organizations, businesses, faith communities:**

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NAME OF ORGANIZATION	CITY	CONTACT (NAME AND EMAIL)
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**For individuals:**

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