



NCEL

National Caucus of
Environmental Legislators

Testimony of the National Caucus of Environmental Legislators Regarding Carbon Pricing Efforts Across the Country

Created by and for state legislators, the National Caucus of Environmental Legislators is a nonprofit that organizes over 1,000 environmentally-committed state legislators from all 50 states and both parties. NCEL provides venues and opportunities for lawmakers to share ideas and collaborate on environmental issues. NCEL does not lobby or take formal positions on legislation, but rather shares insight to act as a clearinghouse on environmental policies.

To Members of the Environment Committee:

The 2018 legislative session has seen the most progress on state carbon pricing legislation in history across the country. Overall, 12 states have proposed an economy-wide price on carbon or a feasibility study to set the stage for similar outcomes.

New Progress for Carbon Pricing in 2018

Washington and Oregon both made significant progress in their efforts to enact the first economy-wide price on carbon, with Washington State being the first state bill to pass out of committee to the Senate floor. Following the conclusion of Washington's session, a coalition of public groups filed an initiative that will put carbon pricing on the state ballot in November, highlighting the public will to see such measures become a reality.

Maryland has joined its East Coast neighbors in proposing a carbon price and DC is about to file its carbon pricing bill. Utah also introduced a carbon pricing bill this year. Their bill was the first to include a Republican co-sponsor, showing increasing bipartisan support for pricing carbon emissions. These new state introductions underscore the growing momentum to price carbon both on the East Coast and across the country

Public Opinion: A Majority of People Favor a Price on Carbon

Throughout the past year, there has been substantial movement in the public's opinion of a price on carbon. According to Yale's Program on Climate Change Communication and George Mason's Center for Climate Change Communication national survey of registered voters in

October 2017, seven in ten registered voters support the idea of a revenue neutral carbon tax.¹ This is an increase from 66% in November 2016.²

Continuing Increase of Business Support

Many companies have stated their public support of a carbon price, including Exxon Mobil, BP, and Shell.³ Additionally, 150 businesses have partnered with the Carbon Pricing Leadership Coalition to help advance carbon pricing internationally. These business include Nestle, Michelin, PG&E, and TD Bank.⁴ With the lack of a national or state price on carbon, nearly 1,400 companies have implemented an internal price on carbon.⁵ Over 100 of these are Fortune 500 companies whose collective annual revenue equals \$7 trillion.⁶

Public Health Benefits

Carbon emissions and worsened air pollution are linked. Reducing the amount of carbon dioxide emissions in the air also is known to improve air quality and public health.

Air pollution is linked to numerous detrimental health impacts such as premature mortality, heart attacks, cardiovascular and respiratory problems, higher asthma rates, strokes, more missed days of school and work, and many more. These symptoms are backed by findings from a Duke University and NASA study⁷, the EPA⁸, and the American Lung Association⁹.

Reducing carbon emissions would improve air quality and therefore reduce the number of asthma attacks, cardiovascular and respiratory hospitalizations, heart attacks, and premature deaths. These benefits would also result in the state saving money.¹⁰

¹ Yale Program on Climate Change Communication, *Politics and Global Warming*, Oct. 2017, <http://climatecommunication.yale.edu/publications/politics-global-warming-october-2017/>

² Yale Program on Climate Change Communication, *Politics and Global Warming*, Nov. 2016, <http://climatecommunication.yale.edu/publications/politics-global-warming-november-2016/>

³ Climate Leadership Council, *Founding Members*, <https://www.clcouncil.org/founding-members/>

⁴ Carbon Pricing Leadership Coalition, *Partners*, <https://www.carbonpricingleadership.org/partners/>

⁵ The Economist, *Companies are moving faster than many governments on carbon pricing*, Jan. 2018, <https://www.economist.com/news/business/21734487-nearly-1400-firms-globally-combined-revenues-7trn-already-use-or-soon-will-internal>

⁶ The World Bank, *Carbon Pricing*, Dec. 2017, <http://www.worldbank.org/en/results/2017/12/01/carbon-pricing>

⁷ Duke University and NASA, *Low Carbon Policies Could Prevent Up to 175,000 US Deaths by 2030*, Feb. 2016, <https://nicholas.duke.edu/about/news/lowcarbonpols-cutdeathsby2030>

⁸ The EPA, *Fact Sheet: Clean Power Plan by the Numbers*, https://19january2017snapshot.epa.gov/cleanpowerplan/fact-sheet-clean-power-plan-numbers_.html

⁹ American Lung Association, *Health Effects of Ozone and Particle Pollution*, <http://www.lung.org/our-initiatives/healthy-air/sota/health-risks/>

¹⁰ Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, *Air Quality and Health Co-Benefits of a Carbon Fee-and-Rebate Bill in Massachusetts*, April 2017, <https://1jf7652uqh8csljrqt8yp9l-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Study-Carbon-Pricing-and-Public-Health.pdf>

Carbon Costs Coalition

At the end of January, legislators from nine states came together to publicly announce the Carbon Costs Coalition to better coordinate state efforts, share insights and lessons learned, and build momentum toward meaningful climate policy at the state and regional level. The Coalition has helped to create a national narrative around carbon pricing as well and has helped to inspire at least three additional states to draft carbon pricing policies.

The Coalition also represents most of the participating states of the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, showing a uniformity of effort in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic region to tackle emissions reductions. With this clear regional commitment, Connecticut is not alone in its efforts to establish a price on carbon.