



Tompkins County Council of Governments

Governor Daniel D. Tompkins Building
Ithaca, NY 14850

Meeting: 02/28/19 03:00 PM
Department: Tompkins County Council of Governments
Category: Legislation or Funding - State and Federal
Functional Category: Environmental

ADOPTED

RESOLUTION NO. 002-2019

DOC ID: 8450

Urging United States Congress to Pass the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act (H.R. 763)

MOVED by Mr. Witmer (Town of Caroline), seconded by Ms. Conger. A voice vote resulted as follows: Ayes – 9, Noes – 2 (Mr. Scheffler, Town of Groton) and Ms. Conger (Village of Groton); Municipalities not in Attendance: Towns of Danby, Ithaca, and Newfield; Villages of Freeville, Lansing, and Trumansburg). RESOLUTION ADOPTED.

WHEREAS climate scientists worldwide are in near-unanimous agreement that the planet Earth is warming rapidly and to a degree that is perilous to human civilization, to numerous species, and to the global ecosystem, and

WHEREAS human activity is a significant contributor to global warming, especially through the use of fossil fuels and the associated release of methane and carbon dioxide, and

WHEREAS a prompt and major shift away from fossil fuels is a necessary cornerstone to any meaningful response to climate change, and

WHEREAS the recently published Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change SR1.5 Report (<https://www.ipcc.ch/sr15/>) states that “Policies reflecting a high price on emissions are necessary” as a key component of any effort to limit global temperature increases to 1.5 degree Celsius, and

WHEREAS this IPCC report also suggests that any carbon pricing policy should be designed to “balance between incentivizing low-carbon behavior and mitigating the adverse distributional consequences of higher energy prices”, and

WHEREAS the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act (H.R. 763) has been introduced in Congress and would establish a steadily increasing fee on fossil fuels at the point of their entry into the economy; which fee would be straightforward and make effective use of free-market mechanisms to promote the transition to greater energy conservation and renewable sources of energy, and

WHEREAS the act would return all revenues (minus 3% for administration) to each American as a monthly dividend, to offset expected higher prices for goods and services, and

WHEREAS this revenue-neutral carbon fee and dividend is an effective method to reduce carbon emissions for the following reasons:

1. The fee would motivate everyone to conserve and adopt renewable energy without the need for extensive governmental regulatory controls or infrastructure;
2. The fee would employ a market approach to encourage innovative processes, not only in energy production, but also in every field in which energy is consumed, e.g. electric cars, mass transportation, architectural planning and construction, water heating, lighting, and air conditioning in residential and commercial buildings;
3. Levying the fee at the point of production would be more efficient, less expensive and provide more accurate signals than would doing so at the point of consumption;

4. The fee would incentivize the development and use of alternative energies and attendant technologies, eliminating the need for government subsidies that attempt to forecast alternative energy winners and losers;
5. Because the fee is levied on the same basis on all businesses, it is fairer to every business and easier to administer than alternatives, such as a cap and trade system;
6. A border adjustment would assess a fee on goods traded with countries without a comparable carbon price, thereby maintaining the competitiveness of US businesses and discouraging relocation to such countries and also encouraging other countries to price carbon.

WHEREAS such a policy would protect lower and middle-income households, as the dividend would allow more than 70% of American households to benefit financially, break even, or have only minimal increased costs (<0.2% income) from this policy; the policy would also create jobs, as the dividend puts money back into local economies, and

WHEREAS further delay in responding to this crisis increases the risk of catastrophic climate change, imminently threatens low-lying coastal areas and land and sea species, threatens water supplies, increases the frequency of severe weather events, increases the cost of undertaking adequate responses, and increases risks to the global economy, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Tompkins County Council of Governments endorses a carbon fee and dividend and urges our representatives in the United States Congress to enact it into law,

RESOLVED, further, that copies of the resolution be sent to Governor Andrew Cuomo, Representative Tom Reed, U.S. Senators Kirsten Gillibrand and Charles Schumer, New York State Senators James Seward, Thomas O'Mara, and Pamela Helming; New York State Assemblywoman Barbara Lifton, and the New York State Association of Towns.

STATE OF NEW YORK)
) ss:
COUNTY OF TOMPKINS)

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct transcript of a resolution adopted by the Tompkins County Council of Governments on February 28, 2019.


Michelle Cocco, Staff
Tompkins County Council of Governments