

NH Resolution to take action on climate pollution - results

Last week, Windham was one of the twenty-four (out of thirty-three) NH towns whose voters passed a "*Resolution to take action on climate pollution*" warrant article, which calls for Carbon Cash-Back legislation at the state and federal levels.

Thank you, Windham! This success is an encouraging milestone for a project that grew from a collaboration of a few grassroots NH climate and energy groups that began just a few months ago. After attending a hearing of the NH House's Science Energy, and Technology Committee on the carbon cash-back bill HB735, a few NH citizens decided it might be worth writing a standard warrant article petition, making a website to provide information and resources, and providing weekly updates so anyone concerned about climate change would have everything they needed to put the warrant article on their town's warrant.

We called our spontaneously-created group the Carbon Cash-Back Coalition (C3). By the time we were ready, submission deadlines were passing before some C3 town champions even had a chance to get started. Volunteers in over eighty NH towns joined for their town, including a high school sophomore in Bow, a retiree in Peterborough, and a mom in Londonderry. The necessary number of signatures were collected and submitted on time in forty-one towns.

Where will the C3 go from here? Another twenty towns will be voting on the resolution through May, and cities have a different process and schedule. The Board of Selectmen or Town Council of towns that voted "Yes" will notify their State Representatives, Governor Sununu, their Members of Congress, and President Trump of their town's request for cash-back carbon pricing legislation. There is a goal of getting on 200 town warrants next year. Other states are interested too.

Where do NH citizens go from here? Let's start preparing for a national price on carbon so our state is ready for it when it happens. Switch to LED light bulbs. Get a home energy audit and act on the recommendations. These will save you money and make your home more comfortable, healthy, and safe. Are you getting ready to buy a new car or truck? Make good gas mileage part of your criteria. Are you getting ready to replace your furnace or hot water heater? Consider efficient heat pump options. In our house, we are getting ready to replace an old gas stove, so we're looking at electric ovens with induction cooktops. These are the kinds of choices that a price on climate pollution incentivizes. Producers know this, and as soon as there is a carbon price they will be strongly motivated to produce more energy-efficient, less polluting products because of consumer demand. There will soon be many more options thanks to the powerful invisible hand of an efficient market.

Because most of us can't afford to replace everything all at once and it will take time for producers to offer better options at affordable prices, the cash-back carbon policy price starts low and increases steadily over time. Because all the money collected from the fee charged on fossil fuel production and imports (minus administration costs) is returned to all households equally, anyone can come out ahead simply by having a smaller than average carbon footprint. Most households will get more money in their cash-back dividend than they pay in higher prices due to the higher costs of producing and importing fossil fuels during the transition. The dividend is compensation for harms and costs for which the carbon pollution fee is collected, but it has a lovely co-benefit of protecting family budgets. See how your family will do at EnergyInnovationAct.org/carbon-dividend-calculator/.

Thank you, Windham voters, for your thoughtful attention to warrant article #24. There were many decisions to make in the voting booth this year, but the one with the most impact on global pollution and the future of our

town, state, country, the global community, and life on Earth was well made. See CarbonCashBack.org for more.

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