Submit an LTE to a local paper: Affordability in Our Time

By John Gage

Rising prices are top of mind these days, from the grocery store to powering our cars and homes. We'd all like a strong economy and a healthy environment. The high energy costs, inflation, and climate pollution we are suffering from today share a common root cause: our dependence on fossil fuels.

When gas and oil prices spike, the effects ripple throughout the economy. Transportation, food production, and energy for the home all become more expensive. Economists consistently find that energy costs are a major driver of inflation. Recent events remind us again how vulnerable fossil fuels are to global disruptions beyond our control, and that, regardless of how much oil and gas the US produces, we remain exposed to global pricing of these commodities.

At the same time, the impacts of climate pollution - more extreme weather, damaged crops, and strained infrastructure - are quietly pushing costs even higher. We are paying for fossil fuels in many hidden ways.

The Carbon Fee and Dividend policy is a solution for these problems. It places a steadily rising fee on fossil fuel production (at the source - coal mines, oil refineries, gas consolidators, and ports of entry) based on the pollution that results from them. Polluters pay the true costs of their products. The money collected doesn't stay in Washington - it is returned directly to all American households in equal monthly cash-back payments.

The cash-back dividend is the key to affordability. Studies show that about two-thirds of households come out ahead financially. The dividend more than offsets the trickle-down higher prices for most families. Instead of being at the mercy of unpredictable fuel markets, families gain a stable source of income while the economy shifts toward cleaner, more reliable, affordable energy.

This solution employs efficient market forces to reduce our dependence on fossil fuels and our exposure to price shocks that drive inflation. It encourages innovation, strengthens local energy resilience, and keeps more money circulating in our communities.

We can stay the course and suffer from periodic spikes in gas prices and pollution, or we can address the root cause. The Carbon Fee and Dividend solution addresses both: it cuts pollution and makes life more affordable for most Americans.

It's a solution that meets the moment. Please tell Congress you want them to address these problems in a way that puts more money in your pocket.

carboncashback.org/projects/cfd-media