



**Boston Globe Opinion-Editorial: Published on April 27, 2019**  
**Should the state institute a carbon tax?**

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Authors, cosponsors and supporters of legislative proposals on Beacon Hill to establish a carbon tax on fossil fuels maintain the tax is the remedy for combating climate change, but any such tax will substantially increase the cost of living for every resident in Massachusetts, hurt small business owners, damage the state's economy, and provide no proven impact on reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

The two key proposals before the Legislature – Senate 1924 and House 2810 – would levy a tax on most energy resources in Massachusetts - including home heating oil, propane, natural gas, gasoline, and diesel fuel to discourage fossil use resulting in reduced carbon dioxide. H-2810 exempts electricity but it's unclear to us whether the already sky-high electric rates in Massachusetts would be impacted by a carbon tax under Senate 1924.

Using carbon dioxide emissions coefficients published by the US Energy Information Agency, my organization calculates that homeowners using heating oil statewide would pay an additional \$487 annually by 2030 under Senate 1924, and \$582 more per year if House 2810 becomes law. Furthermore, we estimate that carbon taxes will add an additional \$700 to \$835 to annual household costs for gasoline in the state.

Addressing climate change and the requirements mandated by the state Global Warming Solutions Act of 2008 are laudable goals that our industry supports. But there are more sensible pathways to achieving these goals without burdening residents with additional taxes on the necessities of life. Let's focus on improved energy efficiency in homes and businesses to further reduce the volume of heating oil, natural gas, and propane currently being used; producing more electricity through renewable sources; and continuing to expand the use of clean, renewable biodiesel blended with heating oil.

In recent months a fuel tax increase in France - effectively a carbon tax - caused petroleum prices to spike and gave rise to nationwide protests and the creation of the international "yellow vest movement." And carbon tax legislation has yet to win approval in any other state in the nation. Lawmakers on Beacon Hill should be mindful of these developments and reject draconian carbon tax proposals.