

Dear MIP&L members and friends,



**Taking Action Against Climate Change:
A Carbon Fee for Massachusetts**

Tuesday, May 3, 2016 at 7:30 pm
Westwood Public Library
660 High St., Westwood, MA 02090

SPEAKERS:
Marc Breslow, Acting Director, The Climate Xchange
Cathy Buckley, Chair, Massachusetts Sierra Club

Massachusetts, already a national leader in energy efficiency, is poised to take a big step in accelerating the transition to clean energy as proposed legislation for carbon pricing gains support. Join us to learn:

- Why we need carbon pricing
- What carbon pricing is and how it works
- What it means for Massachusetts and how it will impact us

In his encyclical on the environment, *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis argues that producers and distributors of fossil fuels should be held responsible for the impact their products have on the environment. Carbon pricing will help to eliminate the "free ride" that polluters enjoy while the rest of us pay the costs.

The burning of fossil fuels is causing unprecedented warming of the earth and contributing to air pollution that is harmful to our health. Massachusetts has the 4th highest rate of asthma in the U.S. and African-Americans are nearly three times as likely to be hospitalized or killed by asthma as whites. Low-income and communities of color bear the brunt of extreme weather events like Hurricanes Sandy and Katrina.

At the Statehouse, the Joint Committee on Telecommunications, Utilities and Energy is considering a proposal that would charge fossil fuel importers a fee based on their fuels' carbon content. The fees would go into a special rebate fund and be passed on directly to households and employers to minimize any increased costs. Each resident would receive an equal rebate, and since low- and moderate-income households tend to use less energy than wealthier ones, they would come out ahead.

The event is free and open to the public.



Presented by the League of Women Voters of Westwood-Walpole-Dedham, Needham, Hingham, Norwood, Sharon-Stoughton, and Winchester.

For information on the Westwood forum visit: www.lwvwestwoodwalpolededham.org.

For more on carbon pricing click here: [Clean Energy Future Coalition](#). The League of Women Voters and MA Interfaith Power & Light are members of the MA Campaign for a Clean Energy Future.

The Case Against Gas Pipelines



Spectra Energy Corp. is planning to build a new *Access Northeast* gas pipeline from the prolific Marcellus field in Pennsylvania to New England and through Massachusetts where it can be connected to Spectra's Maritime and Northeast Pipeline to Nova Scotia. In *The case against gas pipelines: There's too much risk and not enough need* (Commonwealth 3/14/16) Peter Shattuck, Jamie Howland and Varun Kumar describe how natural gas is now undermining Massachusetts' mandate to lower carbon dioxide emissions by 80% by 2050. Now that coal and oil are essentially out of the New England electricity generating mix, natural gas may displace clean renewable energy sources. Both the benefits of natural gas (methane) which can cause 86 times more global warming than carbon dioxide, and the need for more gas to meet winter demand have been exaggerated. "Fully permitted natural gas exporter terminals are waiting on ... [Spectra's Maritime and Northeast] pipeline reversal to supply international markets. Once gas exports commence, New England customers will be competing with buyers in Europe, Asia, and other markets currently paying far higher prices. Under this perverse outcome, New England customers would subsidize up to **\$8 billion** in pipeline construction costs to facilitate exports that could drive domestic prices up by as much as 7.5 percent, according to recent analysis commissioned by the U.S. Department of Energy."

The proposal that electricity users pay for the construction of the *Spectra Access Northeast* pipeline, is both unprecedented and opposed by 97 members of the Massachusetts legislature. Decisions about *Access Northeast* are being made now. Make your voice heard in opposition to the pipeline at the following events:

Tuesday, May 3rd, Rally and Lobby Training at the Statehouse

What: 11:30am Rally/Celebration; 12pm Training/Opportunities to Visit Legislative offices; 1pm Hearing
Where: The front steps of the statehouse, Beacon and Park streets, Boston
RSVP here: <http://goo.gl/forms/hbKlPRhftE>
Share the event on Facebook here: <https://www.facebook.com/events/1118219018240716/>

DPU Hearings about Using the Pipeline Tax to Fund Spectra's Access Northeast Pipeline

Tuesday, May 3, 2016—7:00 pm—Stoughton High School Auditorium
Monday, May 23, 2016—7:00 pm—Walpole High School Auditorium
For more details: <http://www.nofrackedgasinmass.org/dpu-issues-and-actions/>

Energy Facilities Siting Board Hearings on Spectra's Access Northeast Pipeline

Monday, May 2, 2016—Grafton High School—7 pm
Monday, May 2, 2016—Walpole High School—7 pm
Wednesday, May 11, 2016—Abigail Adams Middle School, Weymouth—7 pm
Thursday, May 12, 2016—Ford Middle School, Acushnet—7 pm

Supreme Judicial Court – Oral Arguments about the Legality of the Pipeline Tax

Thursday, May 5, 2016 9:00 am sharp, John Adams Courthouse, Courtroom One, Second Floor, Pemberton Square, Boston
(This is a court case, so there is no opportunity for public comment. Cellphones must be off. No cameras or signs. No T-shirts with slogans on them.)

UCS Report Says More Renewable Energy & Less Natural Gas Needed in MA



A report by the Union of Concerned Scientists outlines an energy plan for Massachusetts relying on more renewable energy and no new natural gas. John Rogers and Paula Garcia of UCS conclude that "By embracing a wide range of clean energy technologies ... Massachusetts would lower the risk of large natural gas price fluctuations, significantly cut its global warming CO2 emissions, and generate significant net benefits for public health and the state's economy."

Massachusetts' Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) requires that increasing percentages of our electricity, must be generated by renewable sources by 2030. The report recommends:

- Increasing solar and wind energy by ramping up the RPS to almost 40% by 2030;
- Requiring utilities to contract for 2,000 megawatts of offshore wind; and
- Requiring utilities to enter long term contracts to buy renewable energy and non-RPS hydropower

Adoption of these recommendations will lower natural gas usage and could bring regional and global economic and public health benefits of \$350 billion in 2030. The UCS report is being used to inform the MA legislature as it prepares an omnibus energy bill, expected to be released in mid May. To read the full report [click here](#).

New Solar Law is Mostly Cloudy with Storms Approaching

The new law enacted by the legislature and signed by Governor Baker is only a stop gap measure which continues to leave the future growth of solar in Massachusetts in jeopardy, and hurts community systems and systems for low-income residents. The costs of electricity to consumers from solar photovoltaic systems depend largely on the value of state Solar Renewable Energy Credits (SRECs), and the amount consumers receive for excess electricity they generate and return to the grid, (net metering credits). Net metering credits are capped when the total amount of electricity generated by solar systems hits certain benchmarks.

By increasing net-metering caps 3%, communities served by Eversource may have enough room to earn net metering credits for another year, but in communities served by National Grid, the cap will be hit again in as little as a few weeks. The retail rate for net metering for low income and community systems is now lowered to 60%, although maintained for most single family and municipal installations. The current SREC system (SREC II) is extended through the end of 2016.

The legislature and the governor need to revisit these issues again soon and should pass legislation that:

- Maintains full retail net-metering for all new systems, and
- Eliminates net metering caps.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Vigil at West Roxbury Lateral Construction Site

When: Monday, May 2, 6:30pm-7:00pm
Where: Spectra West Roxbury Lateral Metering and Regulating Station Construction Site (intersection of Grove & Center St., West Roxbury).

Stop the West Roxbury Lateral has been holding vigils on Monday evenings at the proposed site of the metering and regulating station. For the latest details [click here](#).



Saturday, May 14th, 2016 • 9am to 5pm
Edwards House Meeting and Retreat Center • 1 Badger Road, Framingham, MA

Join high school aged youth of faith from around New England in an opportunity to educate, energize, and organize around responses to climate change and environmental injustice. Learn from young leaders and one another through worship, workshops, sharing meals together, and more.

Featured Speakers:
Mariama White-Hammond, Creation Care Minister, Bethel AME
Margaret Bullitt-Jonas, Missioner for Creation Care, Episcopal and UCC
Ashley Funk, Plaintiff in Our Children's Trust Case

Register at macucc.org/youthAFIRE
Registration deadline May 2nd. Attendance will be capped at 100.

For more information: Contact Alyssa Browning-Gray (browning-grava@macucc.org) or Emma Brewer-Wallin (ebrewerw@gmail.com)



Environmental League of Massachusetts Earth Night 2016:
A cocktail party for a healthy environment and clean energy future

May 31st, 5:30pm-8pm
The Boston College Club
100 Federal St. 36th Floor
Boston, MA

Celebrate 20 years of Earth Night! Enjoy drinks, hors d'oeuvres and spectacular views of Boston from high above the city. Bringing friends, allies and the environmental community together, Earth Night will feature music, merriment and ways to make a difference for the Massachusetts environment. Tickets start at \$35 and sponsorships at \$500. Tickets available at the door as long as you have a photo ID!

To purchase tickets [click here](#).

PLEASE DONATE TODAY



Mass. Interfaith Power & Light provides a faith based response to global warming by helping people and faith communities to lower their carbon footprints and by advocating for public policies that fulfill our moral responsibility to create a sustainable future.

Please help us carry out this critical mission by going to www.MIPandL.org, clicking on the **DONATE** button and making a secure, fully tax deductible donation.

Peace and blessings,
Your friends at MIP&L