

Dear friends,

Massachusetts & Eight States Announce Transportation and Climate Initiative



Nine Northeast and mid-Atlantic states pledged to cooperate on a new system to limit greenhouse gas emissions from burning transportation fuels like gasoline and diesel. In a joint statement, the states and Washington, D.C. said they'll formulate a detailed plan within a year to cap emissions and direct more resources toward low-carbon transportation, among other goals.

They said they would put together a system that "would cap and reduce carbon emissions from the combustion of transportation fuels through a cap-and-invest program or other pricing mechanism, and allow each ... jurisdiction to invest proceeds from the program into low-carbon and more resilient transportation infrastructure." The pact is being endorsed by Connecticut, Delaware, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, and D.C., but those participants hope to get more onboard. New York is notably absent.

"Emissions from transportation account for the largest portion of the region's carbon pollution and a recent report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change found that ambitious reductions are needed within the next decade to avoid dangerous impacts to public health, infrastructure, and the environment," the states said in their joint statement. Read more about the Transportation and Climate Initiative [here](#).

Economy-Wide Carbon Pricing Needed in Massachusetts

Research shows that we are moved more by stories than data when being asked to act on climate change. The latest National Climate Assessment is full of dire data, and it's easy to feel overwhelmed by its implications. So here's a story to consider: In 2008, [British Columbia](#) enacted a law incorporating the social cost of carbon pollution into the cost of fossil fuels. Between 2007 and 2015, the results were twofold: Its economy grew 17 percent (during a period that included the Great Recession), and greenhouse gas emissions fell by almost 5 percent.

Bills putting a price on carbon pollution will be introduced in the Massachusetts legislature early next year. Lowering fossil-fuel emissions has many public health benefits. These include reduced heart and lung diseases, lower asthma rates, fewer missed work and school days and fewer premature fatalities — all of which disproportionately harm vulnerable communities.

Clergy and lay leaders of faith communities may take a stance by signing the [Massachusetts Interfaith Call for Carbon Pricing](#).

Click [here](#) to sign and join the more than 280 clergy and lay leaders who have already done so.

MA Department of Public Utilities Orders Columbia Gas to Complete Merrimack Valley Work by Oct. 31, 2019



The Department of Public Utilities has set an Oct. 31, 2019, deadline for the remaining Columbia Gas restoration work following the Merrimack Valley gas disaster, indicating that recovery efforts will continue well into the new year. While the heat is on now in most homes affected by the Sept. 13 gas fires and explosions, work is far from over. The Department of Public Utilities said Monday Columbia Gas would be responsible for ensuring roads are repaved, sidewalks restored, and that gas boilers and furnaces that were repaired in the rush to re-light are replaced.

"It's Columbia Gas' responsibility to meet that date and the only way they miss it is if they don't care about what they're doing. They would have to forget about their responsibilities to the city of Lawrence and the towns of North Andover and Andover in order to miss that date," Rivera said. If Columbia Gas does miss its latest deadline, Rivera said the state should take away the company's license.

Rivera said Monday about 1,000 meters had furnaces and boilers that were repaired, but not yet replaced. "We knew they were going to have to come back and replace the stuff they had repaired," Rivera said. After heating season, about April, Columbia Gas crews will "start in earnest" on replacing those appliances, the mayor said. That's also about the time road work will get underway, he said.

Columbia Gas' ongoing efforts will now be overseen by a team from Nitsch Engineering, with offices in Lawrence, Boston and Worcester. Anyone who experiences a problem with their furnace or boiler over the winter should contact Columbia Gas.

The Oct. 31 deadline will stand unless a different date is agreed upon with any of the three affected communities, DPU said. The department said it would fine Columbia Gas up to \$1 million per violation of the order. A DPU moratorium on all Columbia Gas projects outside of emergency and compliance work remains in place. The DPU announced the selection of Dynamic Risk Assessment Systems, Inc. to conduct an independent statewide examination of the safety of the natural gas distribution system and the operational and maintenance functions of natural gas companies in the Commonwealth.

Underground gas pipeline safety remains a major concern throughout the state in the aftermath of the disaster that took the life of Leonel Rondon and led to the destruction and damage of hundreds of buildings. There are at least 30 Grade 1 leaks — the most dangerous and lethal ones — in Massachusetts, and they are disproportionately in lower-income communities and communities of color. Boston University found more than 3,300 methane leaks in the City of Boston. "Currently, the state is losing more gas from its aging system than it is saving through its nation-leading energy efficiency programs" According to the [Conservation Law Foundation](#).

Massachusetts gas pipelines are among the oldest in the country.

2 Actions, One Moral Heartbeat



by Avery Davis Lamb, Federal Policy Associate

Separated by 4500 miles, youth leaders took major action in both Katowice, Poland and Washington DC, pushing climate change to the front page of media and political platforms.

In Katowice, over 100 young people, indigenous leaders, and community activists walked out of a U.S. sideshow promoting the continued use of fossil fuels. The panel of 5 included the Department of Energy's Director of Fossil Energy, the Special Advisor to the President on energy, and the executive of a natural gas company. All of them peddled the term "innovation," but it was clear the only innovations they were interested in were "cleaner" fossil fuels and various kinds of carbon capture and storage.

Just as the special advisor to the president on energy started in on the "innovative technology of zero-emissions fossil fuel technology," the room erupted in laughter and the people took over the floor. For the next ten minutes, the room heard from black, indigenous, and Latino activists, sharing how they have been impacted by climate change. The group chanted "Keep it in the Ground" and "shame on you" as they marched out of the room.

The room was clearly more interested in them than the panel. After they left, the room was only 10% full.

Meanwhile, in Washington DC, over 1,000 youth filled the halls of Congress, calling on legislators to support ambitious action on climate: the Select Committee on Climate Change and the Green New Deal. They occupied three offices: Nancy Pelosi, Steny Hoyer, and Jim McGovern, all expected to be key leaders in the new House majority. While the first two came up short of supporting the committee, McGovern indicated that he will support the committee and the Green New Deal, and to date the group has received 35 endorsements of the proposal.

Strong Bi-partisan Support for Green New Deal



The Yale Program on Climate Change Communication reports that the Green New Deal endorsed by 40 members of Congress has strong bi-partisan support. Read the national survey results [here](#).

Save the Date!



January 23, 2019
Youth Lobby Day
State House
Our Climate

March 10, 2019
Interfaith Summit on Vulnerability and Climate Change
Old South Church, Boston
Communities Responding to Extreme Weather ([CREW](#))

Sunday, March 24, 2019
The Second Jewish Climate Conference
in cooperation with the Synagogue Council of MA, Temple Reyim of Newton, MA, and other partners
[Jewish Climate Action Network](#)

Prayers and Reflections



The grace that comes from belonging to life

"When you act on behalf of something greater than yourself, you begin to feel it acting through you with a power that is greater than your own.

"This is grace.

"Today, as we take risks for the sake of something greater than our separate, individual lives, we are feeling graced by other beings and by Earth itself.

"Those with whom and on whose behalf we act give us strength and eloquence and staying power we didn't know we had.

"We just need to practice knowing that and remembering that we are sustained by each other in the web of life. Our true power comes as a gift, like grace, because in truth it is sustained by others.

"If we practice drawing on the wisdom and beauty and strengths of our fellow human beings and our fellow species we can go into any situation and trust that the courage and intelligence required will be supplied."

Tom Atlee, founder of Co-Intelligence Institute

God of love and God of hope,
Let the seeds we sow, go far and wide.
Help the words we speak, go deep within
Let them turn many hearts and turn many minds.
Give them strength so that they are heard.
Let words turn to deeds, from heart to hands.
Help these deeds become witness,
So that others are inspired.
Help that action turn to hope.
Let that hope spread wide like ripples in a pool.
Give it strength to flow through us,
like a mountain stream in springtime.
May the day come soon where everyone will see,
A vision of the future where water and air are clean,
And people can flourish on the land.

PLEASE DONATE TODAY

Donate by going to [www.MIPandL.org](#) and clicking on the red **Donate** button.

Peace and blessings,

Your friends at Massachusetts Interfaith Power & Light