

Dear MIP&L members and friends,

Overflow Crowd at State House Calls for Fees on Carbon



At a packed State House hearing on June 20 more than 400 supporters called for the Joint Committee on Telecommunications, Utilities, and Energy (TUE) to release Senate Bill 1821 or House 1726. Both bills would impose fees on fossil fuels in relation to the amount of carbon dioxide that they release, while rebating most or all of the money to the public. The bills seek to put a price on carbon equal to the cost of the damage caused by emissions of carbon pollution.

"I was first elected in 2008 when the Global Warming Solutions Act (GWSA) was passed," said **Representative Jennifer Benson**, sponsor of the House bill. "At this rate, we will not meet the 2050 requirement under the Act," referring to the GWSA's mandate that Massachusetts cut its greenhouse gas emissions 80 percent by 2050. Carbon pricing is the next logical step in our policies to address climate change, Benson argued.

Six other state representatives stood in support of Benson, including **Rep. Stephen Kulik**, Vice-Chair of the House Ways & Means Committee, which would likely have a bill before it should carbon pricing legislation pass the TUE Committee. He said that because driving is a necessity in his large district, he is pleased that the bills provide a 30 percent higher rebate for residents of rural areas.

Dozens of other witnesses who supported the two bills included business people, economists, clergy, leaders of environmental organizations, health care specialists, and former officials.



Faith panel, Rev. Bruce Teague, Rev. Dr. Jim Antal and Rabbi Matt Soffer addressing TUE committee

Rev. Dr. Jim Antal the leader of the largest Protestant denomination in Massachusetts, the United Church of Christ, asked the committee to embrace the opportunity to become the first state to require us to pay the true cost of energy from fossil fuels. **Rabbi Matt Soffer** of Temple Israel, Boston, urged the legislators "to cement our status as a beacon for all and pass a strong bill that will bring carbon pricing—and the many benefits, both economic and social that come with it." **Father Bruce Teague** a parish priest from Western Massachusetts commented on how farmers can no longer depend on water from ice-melt and how even Sheffield set amidst wetlands, lacked for water last summer.

Jonathan Levy, a professor at Boston University's School of Public Health, said a study he conducted shows that there would be substantial health benefits due to cutting other air pollutants that are released along with carbon dioxide. Noting that health co-benefits are immediate and local, Levy said that "there is nothing you can do in this moment more important than passing these bills."

Dr. Aaron Bernstein, a pediatrician at Boston Children's Hospital, said that climate change poses a severe threat to the health of the children he serves, adding "waiting is not an option." "To my generation, nothing is more important than climate change. We need solutions now. We demand that you pass a carbon pricing bill," 14 year-old **Aislyn Jewett** told the committee. "Fossil fuel pollution is a crime against our generation," Aislyn concluded.

A panel of economists, including professors from MIT, Harvard, and Tufts, argued for the effectiveness and economic benefits of carbon fees in preference to other policies for cutting greenhouse gas emissions.

Chris Knittel of MIT and **Gilbert Metcalf** of Tufts both emphasized that the predictability of carbon fees that rise over time according to a fixed schedule would help businesses to plan for investments in clean energy and other measures to cut their use of fossil fuels. Read more at the **MA Campaign for a Clean Energy Future**. By Marc Breslow, Ph.D., Climate XChange, and Vince Maraventano, MA Interfaith Power & Light.



National & International Religious Leaders Lament and Condemn US Announcement on Paris Agreement

Creation Justice Ministries and the **National Council of Churches** "joined together in sorrow and lament at President Trump's announcement that the United States will withdraw from the Paris Climate Agreement", saying "We believe this withdrawal endangers a sustainable future, departs from the will of the whole world, and breaks the Great Commandment to love God and neighbor."

President and CEO of **American Jewish World Services**, Robert Bank said that the longer the U.S. denies climate change and "fails to take responsibility for its outsized contribution to global warming", the greater the risk posed to the world." "President Trump has broken America's promise and put the United States government on the wrong side of history, spurning our partners in combating climate change and abandoning the world's most vulnerable communities," Bank said.

Eleven Catholic organizations issued a letter expressing "deep disappointment" over President Trump's decision to withdraw the United States from the Paris Agreement and cease American contributions to the U.N. Green Climate Fund that will help poorer nations address climate change. The letter, organized by the **Catholic Climate Covenant**, followed a statement from the **U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops** urging President Trump to "honor the Paris Agreement" and the bishops' repeated support for the Green Climate Fund.

According to Patrick Carolan, executive director of the **Franciscan Action Network** "When large countries like the U.S. deny the reality of the climate crisis and pull out of commitments holding us accountable for doing our part to curb global temperature rise, we are turning our backs on the poor and vulnerable, which goes directly against our Franciscan-Christian values."

The Rev. John C. Dorhauer, General Minister and President of the **United Church of Christ** and national leaders of the UCC declared that, "President Trump's decision to abandon the Paris Climate Accord violates the values and vision that are basic to Christian faith. Our Judeo-Christian heritage teaches that the Earth and its web of life are precious in God's sight (Genesis 1-2:3) . . . and that we are entrusted with loving the Earth as God loves it (Genesis 2:15).

"Withdrawing from the Paris Climate Accord is a tragic mistake, and we applaud the **Parliament of the World's Religions strong condemnation** of the President's decision. We concur that this decision is scientifically, economically, medically, politically and morally wrong."

They called upon congregations and clergy to:

- Speak from their pulpits about the moral obligation to protect God's creation.
- Set a moral example through their words and actions; and
- Be bold and courageous in proclaiming truth in the public square.

"In the streets, at the State House, with our phones and emails, by committing our time, financial resources and prayers – it is up to us – we the people – to bend the moral arc of justice. And we will."

Sustainable House of Worship Workshop



**Sunday October 15, 2017
1:30 pm – 5:30 pm
First Church of Christ Longmeadow
763 Longmeadow Street
Longmeadow, MA 01106**

Leading by example can be a powerful part of our moral responsibility to care for creation. By reducing the carbon footprints at our houses of worship we also lower energy bills and free up funds needed for other important purposes.

1:30 pm: Registration, refreshments and networking.
2:00-5:30 pm: Workshop:

All faiths welcome!

Clergy, lay leaders, building & creation care committee members encouraged to attend. We recommend 2 attendees per house of worship. Light refreshments will be served. Fee is \$20 payable online through PayPal, or at the door by check.

Register in advance at <http://conta.cc/2rsBUAh>.

For more information contact Vince Maraventano at vince@MIPandL.org or 617-244-0755.

Sponsored by The Massachusetts Conference of the United Church of Christ

First Congregational Church of Stoneham: A Catalyst for the Community



First Congregational Church (FCC) Stoneham was founded in 1729 as the first church in the Town of Stoneham. The Trustees were prompted to take a close look at their 175-year-old church building in response to soaring electricity and water bills coupled with drafty windows and a sanctuary and meeting rooms that were difficult to keep at a comfortable temperature. They also wanted to model good behavior in response to the climate change crisis.

FCC, with the help of MA IP&L engaged in a multi-year effort to upgrade the building systems for 2016. Work included IP&L's engagement to their heating system and thermostats; a full LED lighting retrofit; an ongoing project to upgrade to double pane energy-efficient windows; and the addition of insulation in some areas. The results? **Carbon dioxide emissions in 2016 were 62.7 metric tons lower** than in 2012 and **energy costs were reduced by \$25,013**.

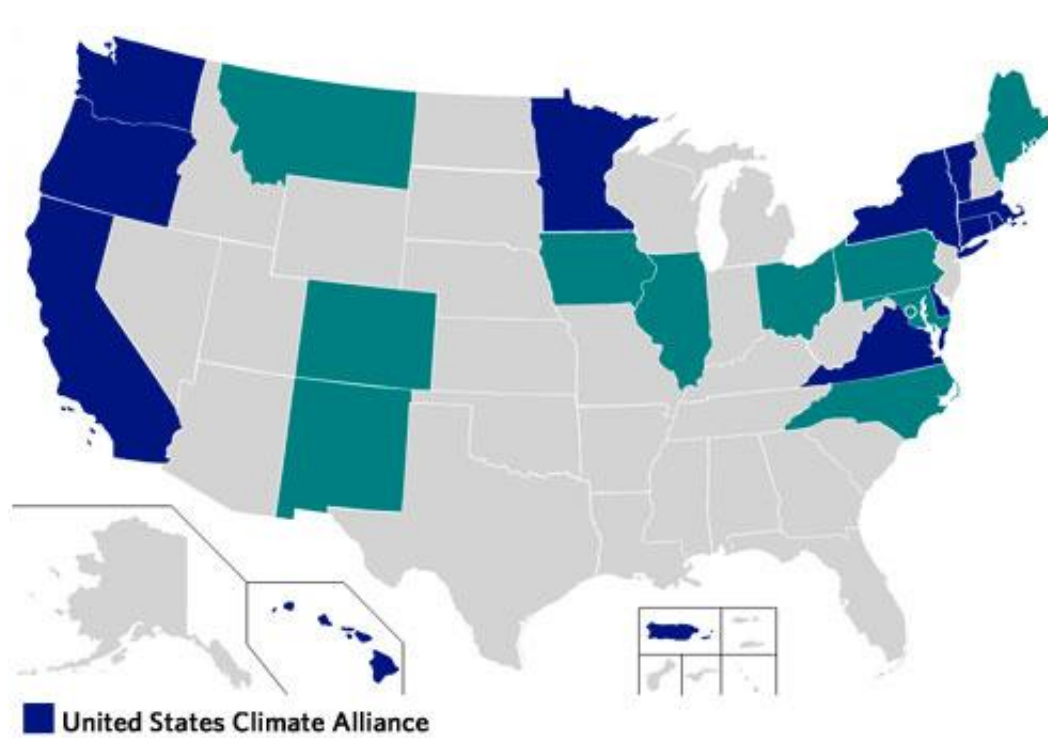
Then in December 2016 with the signing of a 20-year power purchase agreement they installed a 35 kW solar PV system. Installer SunBug Solar is offering discounts to FCC members to install solar on their homes and matching them with donations to FCC to use for energy improvements or any other needs the church may have.

According to FCC pastor Rev. Meredith Allen, "We believe we are created in the image of God, and in her image God and our neighbor when we choose to protect the environment. This is our mandate as inheritors of the Judeo-Christian tradition. By going solar and confronting the deadly threat of climate change, we hope to be a catalyst for our entire community."

For more information [click here](#).

Join MA IP&L, get an Environmental Stewardship Assessment and lead by example. Contact Vince@MIPandL.org or 617-244-0755.

United States Climate Alliance adds 10 new members committed to Paris Accord



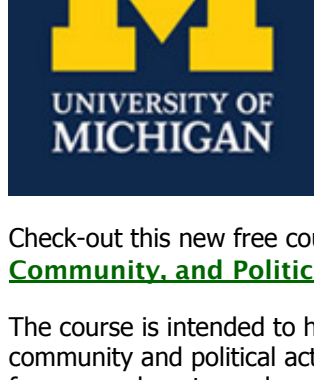
United States Climate Alliance
Other areas whose governing officials have expressed support for the Paris Agreement

The U.S. Climate Alliance announced that Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Oregon, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, Vermont and Virginia have all joined the coalition, which is committed to upholding the Paris Accord and taking aggressive action on climate change.

In response to President Trump's decision to withdraw from the Paris Accord, Washington Gov. Jay Inslee, New York Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo, and California Gov. Edmund G. Brown Jr. formed the Alliance to convene U.S. states committed to achieving the U.S. goal of reducing emissions 26-28 percent from 2005 levels and meeting or exceeding the targets of the federal Clean Power Plan.

Read more [here](#).

New University of Michigan Course Teaches Leaders to Take Action on Climate



Check-out this new free course from the University of Michigan: **[Act on Climate: Steps to Individual, Community, and Political Action](#)**.

The course is intended to help learners understand, address and respond to climate change with individual, community and political action. Drawing from a range of academic experts and professional leaders, it focuses on how to apply social change theories to translate learning into action in the areas of food, energy, transportation and the built environment.

PLEASE DONATE TODAY

Donate by going to www.MIPandL.org and clicking on the red **Donate** button.

Peace and blessings,

Your friends at MIP&L