

## **This is a Climate Crisis. We need to act like it.**

NOAA & NASA Confirm Last Decade Was Hottest in Human History

*“Era of **global boiling** has arrived”*

*“We are on a highway to climate hell”*

~Antonio Guterres, UN Secretary General

It is like our Mother Earth is now in  
Stage 4 Cancer.



We are in a Climate Crisis and we need to act like it!

NOAA and NASA have confirmed, the last decade was the hottest in human history.

The UN Secretary General has declared *“The Era of global boiling has arrived”* and *“We are on a highway to Climate Hell.”*

Climate Change has been described as Atmospheric Cancer. Back in the 70s when we first saw pollution having a serious impact on our atmosphere, that is like being diagnosed with Stage 1. Advance the clock and we're now in Stage 4, a Climate Tipping Point.

The steps you take in Stage 1 are different than the steps you take in Stage 4.

We all agree we must address global warming by weaning our State off of fossil fuels. So what is our best way forward? Today I'll share some findings about carbon taxes, and why these policies are a concern and don't meet the needs of the Stage 4 crisis we are in.

Sources:

UN Secretary General: "Era of global boiling has arrived!"

<https://www.commondreams.org/news/hottest-year-ever-2023>

The Guardian - Hottest year in history:

<https://www.theguardian.com/science/2023/jul/27/scientists-july-world-hottest-month-record-climate-temperatures>

Bloomberg - "World on 'Highway to Climate Hell': UN Secretary General:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WoK7L5pxQFA>

## **The Carbon Cashback – A Market-based Approach**

- Uses taxes instead of emissions limits to regulate greenhouse gas emissions.
- Taxes are levied on petroleum distributors, who push up costs for energy and gasoline on to consumers.
- Without reasonable alternatives, families will be stuck with higher energy bills and costs.
- Fossil fuel companies get to keep polluting, while passing the cost of polluting on to families.

Carbon Cashback is a market based approach, that assumes “the market” delivers the most optimum solution that could never be achieved by policy or planning. This approach uses taxes instead of emission limits to regulate greenhouse gas emissions. Evidence shows this approach won’t achieve the goal, and in some instances, the market worsens the problem.

Putting faith in market solutions to deliver changes for how we power our world is dangerous. Markets are not, and have never been, moral structures. They do not exist to protect our common resources or promote equality. They only exist to make a profit.

Carbon taxes are levied on petroleum distributors, who will pass increased costs onto families. Without reasonable alternatives, families will be stuck with higher energy costs. And for those that file taxes, they’ll hope to recoup expenses in their tax rebate. This means that not only will fossil fuel companies get to keep polluting, but they can pass the cost of polluting onto families.

Source:

Nuts, Bolts, and Pitfalls of Carbon Pricing: An Equity-Based Primer on Paying to Pollute. - NAACP Report  
<https://naacp.org/resources/nuts-bolts-and-pitfalls-carbon-pricing-equity-based-primer-paying-pollute>

## **CC CLAIM: Purchasing Power of Low & Middle Income Households Will Increase (Rebates > ↑Fossil Fuel Costs)**

HOWEVER: Sample scenario- Fully Implemented CC Tax: For an Individual, renter, living in Waianae, works in Honolulu (64 miles roundtrip, or 16,640 miles/year for the 260 days of travel for work alone).

- 666 gallons of gasoline/yr just for work (if car gets 25 miles/gallon).
- Carbon emissions tax = \$1.08 per gallon
- **666 gallons of gas will cost additional \$719.28**
- **Tax credit for an individual filing = \$646.**

**Emissions don't fall. But prices rise.**

Carbon Cashback claims purchasing power of low and middle income households will increase because rebates will be greater than increased costs from fossil fuel use. However we did a sample real-world scenario to check the math and came up with a different conclusion.

When the Carbon Cashback tax is fully implemented, if you are an individual, renting, living in Waianae and working in Honolulu, by the end of the year, you'll have spent an additional **\$719.28** because of the carbon tax just to go to work, not counting other driving you do. However your tax credit in the end would only come out to **\$646**.

If the only way to get to work is to drive, folks will drive no matter what gas costs. If they're having difficulty making ends meet, anything that adds to their cost of living is a burden. Bottom line: Emissions won't fall. But prices will rise.

Obviously there will be scenarios where individuals 'come out ahead' or 'break even'. But a point that must be made is that folks shouldn't accept these claims and projections at face value, and really think through the consequences of this proposed policy.

**Sources:** Carbon emissions tax estimate and tax credit are based on information provided in the draft of the 2024 Carbon Cashback bill (draft bill shared by Paul Bernstein).

Commuting Oahu: 'It Takes Your Time And It Gives You Back Stress'

<https://www.civilbeat.org/2018/12/commuting-oahu-it-takes-your-time-and-it-gives-you-back-stress/>

**OF SPECIAL NOTE FROM THIS REPORT:** "The number of Hawaii residents commuting 90 minutes or more soared 63 percent from 2010 to 2015, **to almost 17,000 people**, according to an analysis of Census data by Pew Research Center."

## CC WON'T BENEFIT LOW & MIDDLE INCOME FAMILIES

- The tax does not address the infrastructure needed for a low carbon economy
- Amount they may get back is not sufficient to help with upfront transition costs, and if they are a renter or live in a condo, transitioning is not even within their control
- Punishes consumers for fossil fuel use before viable alternatives are available (Government policies & spending to build out infrastructure)



So despite claims, Carbon Cashback actually **won't** benefit low and middle income families. The tax doesn't address the infrastructure needed for a low carbon economy. Without having the systems in place in our communities to support making a transition, like public transportation and adequate public EV charging systems, we're putting the cart before the horse by creating this tax.

Many don't have the means to transition. The amount they may get back is not sufficient to help with upfront costs to make a transition. And if they are a renter or live in a condo, transitioning is not even within their control, and they can't just install solar panels and an EV charger where they live.

## CARBON CASHBACK BILL CLAIMS: A CLOSER LOOK

“Carbon Cashback will reduce emission 10%”

- **Reduction is cumulative CO2 emissions from 2025 to 2045 = 0.5% per year\***
- **Does not include emissions from waste-to-energy or biofuels**

Another claim addresses emissions reductions.

In testimony, Carbon Cashback proponents state that it will reduce Hawaii's carbon emissions by 10%.

It's important to note that the timeframe is 20 years, so this means projections for the reductions amount to averaging only half of a percent per year, which does not even come close to making a dent in what is needed.

**Importantly, the emissions data used in the UHERO report does not include emissions from waste-to-energy or biofuels in their projections.** That's concerning.

Sources:

Bullet #1: Climate Policy Journal:

<https://uhero.hawaii.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Coffman-La-Croix-et-al.-Impact-Carbon-Tax-Hawai-Emissions-and-Economy-CLIMATE-POLICY-2022.pdf>

Bullet #2: UHERO study for HSEO: Carbon Pricing Assessment for Hawai'i Economic and Greenhouse Gas Impacts Prepared for the Hawai'i State Energy Office FINAL April 23, 2021 (at p.51)

[https://energy.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/HawaiiCarbonPricingStudy\\_Final\\_Apr2021.pdf](https://energy.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/HawaiiCarbonPricingStudy_Final_Apr2021.pdf)

Hawai'i Carbon Pricing Study Additional Scenarios & Administrative Considerations A Report to the State of Hawai'i Tax Review Commission December 16, 2021 (at p.28)

[https://files.hawaii.gov/tax/stats/trc/docs2022/Appendix\\_A.pdf](https://files.hawaii.gov/tax/stats/trc/docs2022/Appendix_A.pdf)

# LEGAL POLLUTION

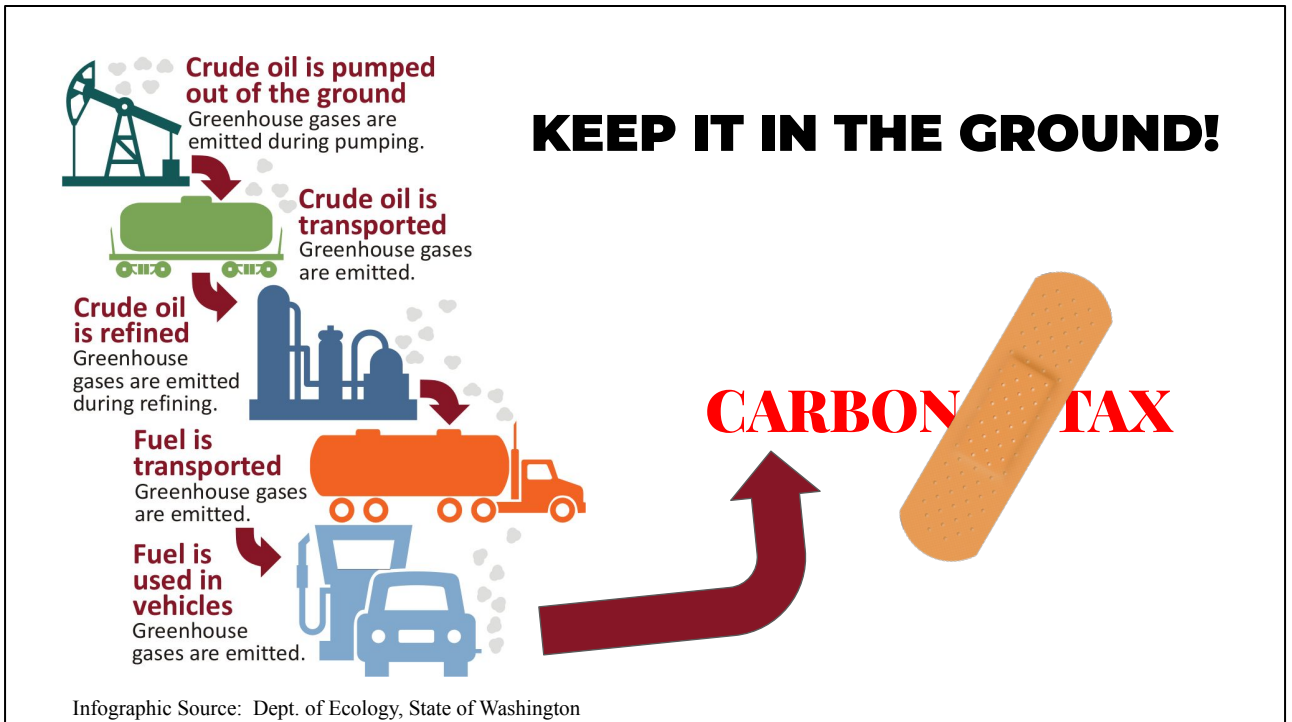
- **A carbon tax helps the fossil fuel industry shift responsibility for climate change from fossil fuel companies to customers**
- **A fee or a tax condones an activity**
- **A fine or prohibition makes the activity illegal**
- **Putting a tax on carbon legalizes pollution**



A carbon tax helps the fossil fuel industry shift the responsibility for climate change from fossil fuel companies to customers. Essentially, all the various carbon pricing plans give the fossil fuel industry a way to pay a nominal tax or fee to continue to pollute, legitimizes their ability to continue to pollute, and gives them the immunity to do so while they pass the fee on to consumers.

A fee or a tax condones an activity. A fine or prohibition makes the activity illegal. Putting a tax on carbon legalizes pollution

I doubt very much that anyone in Hawaii would think that we should be dealing with the Red Hill fuel leak crisis or PFAS in our drinking water by putting a price on a gallon of jet fuel or PFAS in our water and then use that money to try to fix our water infrastructure in the years to come. We'd all be incensed by that proposal.



It's important to remember that much of pollution caused by CO2 emissions already happens *prior* to it being used by consumers. When we're talking about carbon taxes, we're talking about doing something *after the fact*. After the fossil fuel pollution has been taken out of the ground, and after all the pollution emitted from the entire well-to-wheel process is already out there. So by the time we set a tax on it, a huge amount of the destruction has already been done.

So we're talking about not actually stopping or keeping fossil fuels in the ground, we're talking about a band-aid.

Infographic Source: Dept. of Ecology, State of Washington

## SWEDEN'S CARBON TAX – WHAT DOES THE DATA SHOW?

- Sweden implemented carbon fee in 1991
- One of the world's highest carbon price, > \$125/ton
- Studies range in reduction estimates (0% to 17% per year)
- 2016 report concluded the tax has resulted in a rise in biomass heating from 25% in 1990, to **70% in 2012**.
- the resulting biogenic CO<sub>2</sub> emissions **are not counted as a part of the total greenhouse gas emissions (incl. in HI)**.

Let's consider actual data from existing carbon taxes and take a look at Sweden, which is considered a carbon-tax success story.

According to a report from 2016, the effect of their carbon tax on fossil fuel consumption has resulted in a rise in using biomass for energy from 25% in 1990, to 70% in 2012.

Despite the burning of biomass for electricity being worse than coal, emissions from the use of biofuels, like wood, biogas, etc., are reported as 'biogenic' carbon dioxide emissions, and according to international regulations, they're not counted as a part of total greenhouse gas emissions.

Clearly, some of the emissions reductions attributed to Sweden are a result of this creative accounting. **They're switching from burning fossil fuels to biomass and not counting those climate-wrecking CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.**

Sweden is among many that have imposed a carbon tax and has also politically defined tree-based electricity to be carbon neutral.

It's important to point out that the 'carbon neutral' definition also influences projections in the UHERO report that the carbon cashback bill is based on. In the report it specifies that they don't include emissions from waste-to-energy nor from biofuels in their projections. So we must keep that in mind when considering their emissions projection claims.



Sources:

Carbon Tax Worldwide by Country 2023:

<https://www.statista.com/statistics/483590/prices-of-implemented-carbon-pricing-instruments-worldwide-by-select-country/>

Does Carbon Pricing Reduce Emissions? A Review Of Ex-Post Analyses by Jessica Green, Professor studying Climate Change, Carbon Markets, & Fossil Fuel Companies at The University of Toronto.

<https://iopscience.iop.org/article/10.1088/1748-9326/abdae9>

World Bank - When It Comes to Emissions Sweden Has Its Cake and Eat It Too:

<https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2016/05/16/when-it-comes-to-emissions-sweden-has-its-cake-and-eats-it-too>

Statistics Sweden - Greenhouse Gas Emissions From The Swedish Economy Increased By 4% In 2021:

<https://www.scb.se/en/finding-statistics/statistics-by-subject-area/environment/environmental-accounts-and-sustainable-development/system-of-environmental-and-economic-accounts/pong/statistical-news/environmental-accounts---emissions-to-air-2021/#:~:text=Emissionsfromtheus eof.thetotalgreenhousegasemissions>

UHERO study for HSEO: Carbon Pricing Assessment for Hawai'i Economic and Greenhouse Gas Impacts Prepared for the Hawai'i State Energy Office FINAL April 23, 2021 (at p.51)

[https://energy.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/HawaiiCarbonPricingStudy\\_Final\\_Apr2021.pdf](https://energy.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/HawaiiCarbonPricingStudy_Final_Apr2021.pdf)

### **ADDITIONAL NOTE FOR BULLET #3**

Studies range in their reduction estimates from 0% to 17% per year, and **it is important to note that the *upward* bound was considered an *outlier* among all 37 studies.**

See citation above for “Does Carbon Pricing Reduce Emissions? A Review Of Ex-Post Analyses” by Jessica Green

# Save the Climate, Burn a Tree

## Carbon Taxes Elevate False Solutions Like Tree burning... Think Hu Honua

**“Carbon taxes focus on one sector (energy) and hope that the market will choose the right solutions in the right time frame for all sectors. It’s just as likely to elevate false solutions like nuclear power, biomass and waste incineration.”**

~Mike Ewall, Esq., Beyond Burning, national expert on energy and water issues

In real world cases like Sweden, we find that carbon taxes elevate and favor false solutions.

By only punishing fossil fuels, a carbon tax puts things like nuclear power, “biomass” and waste incineration at a competitive advantage. In the Citizens’ Climate Lobby REMI report it even helped put natural gas ahead of coal, ignoring the methane impacts that make it worse than coal. We can’t count on the market to pick the clean solutions like conservation, efficiency, wind, solar and energy storage over cheap, polluting false solutions, most of which are worse than coal for global warming.

Burning biomass is climate-wrecking. This is not a good path forward.

Carbon Tax proponents acknowledge that the government making environmentally harmful energy choices is a possible outcome as a result of the tax. But sidestepping the issue and simply suggesting that this problem can be addressed later in separate legislation is not a good plan.

Sources:

REMI Report:

<https://citizensclimatelobby.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/The-Economic-Climate-Fiscal-Power-and-Demographic-Impact-of-a-National-Fee-and-Dividend-Carbon-Tax-5.25.18.pdf> (at p.40)

Energy Justice Network:

<https://www.energyjustice.net/content/are-carbon-taxes-another-false-solution>

## Review of 37 Studies Showed Carbon Pricing Had Limited Impact on Reducing CO2 Emissions

In her peer reviewed study, “Does Carbon Pricing Reduce Emission? A Review of Ex-Post Analyses” by Professor Jessica Green, University of Toronto, studying climate change, carbon markets, and fossil fuel companies— she reviewed all 37 studies that assess the actual effects of carbon pricing policy on emissions reductions, and concluded that overall, the evidence indicates that aggregate reductions from carbon pricing has a limited impact on emissions - generally between 0% and 2% per year.

Do Carbon Pricing plans like Carbon Taxes actually cut CO2 emissions?

The claims that carbon taxes are the most efficient and least cost solution to addressing the climate crisis are contradicted by the evidence that carbon taxes are deemed consistently too low to work and that they're not robust in their results in sufficiently cutting carbon emissions.

A peer reviewed research paper reviewed all 37 studies that assessed the **actual effects** of carbon pricing policy on emissions reductions. The author concluded that, overall, aggregate reductions from carbon pricing has a limited impact on emissions—generally between 0% and 2% per year.

The author sums it up, stating: “*We’ve now had 30 years of experience on carbon pricing, and not a hell of a lot to show for it.*”

Sources:

Does Carbon Pricing Reduce Emissions? A Review Of Ex-Post Analyses. by Jessica Green, Professor studying Climate Change, Carbon Markets, & Fossil Fuel Companies at The University of Toronto.

<https://iopscience.iop.org/article/10.1088/1748-9326/abdae9>

Vox - Carbon Tax Ineffective in Cutting Emissions:

<https://www.vox.com/2021/3/5/22310179/carbon-tax-climate-change-wealth-tax>

## Lesson from Canada: Carbon Tax Hurts Local Business

**2018 study findings:** Carbon tax has negative impacts on both food prices & food consumption patterns in Canada.

*“The reality is that the carbon tax stresses margins for everyone up and down the food chain. ...that makes Canadian farmers less competitive against imports. His asparagus competes against Mexican product that had lower input costs before implementation of the tax... The unintended result would be a higher carbon output from more imports being hauled into Canada by boat, plane and truck.”* Ontario Fruit & Vegetables Growers' Association

**Lesson for Hawaii:** A carbon tax would increase the disadvantage of locally produced food as compared to imported food (where neither the embedded emissions nor the emissions from shipping the product to Hawaii are taxed).

A 2018 study analyzed the impact of a carbon tax on food prices & consumption patterns in Canada. Their findings suggest that a carbon tax has **negative impacts on both food prices & food consumption patterns**.

According to the Ontario Fruit & Vegetables Growers' Association, quote: “The reality is that the carbon tax stresses margins for everyone up and down the food chain...that makes Canadian farmers less competitive against imports. His asparagus competes against Mexican product that had lower input costs before implementation of the tax. The unintended result would be a higher carbon output from more imports being hauled into Canada by boat, plane and truck.”

This illustrates how a carbon tax hurts local business.

Lesson for Hawaii: A carbon tax would increase the **disadvantage** of locally produced food as compared to imported food where neither the embedded emissions nor the emissions from shipping the product to Hawaii are taxed.

Sources:

The Impact of Carbon Tax on Food Prices and Consumption in Canada, T. Wu, P.J. Thomassin, Research Papers in Economics (International Association of Agricultural Economists), 30 Jun 2018 <https://ageconsearch.umn.edu/record/275913?ln=en>

Why Growers May Never Reconcile the Carbon Tax.  
<https://thegrower.org/news/why-growers-may-never-reconcile-carbon-tax>

## BC CARBON TAX – WHAT DOES THE DATA SHOW?

- \* Tax started 2008. Tax rate increased to \$65 per ton 4/2023.
- \* 2021: Greenhouse gas emissions in B.C. were 2.8% lower than 2007 baseline year (14 years later). Lower emissions were noted in 2020 but attributed to covid pandemic. 2021 data noted a rebound (1% increase) from previous year.
- \* 2009 - 2014: greenhouse gas emissions from taxed sources rose by 4.3%. During this same time period, emissions from non-taxed sources fell by 2.1%.
- \* Carbon tax in BC has become quite controversial. In a 2023 poll: more than 3 in 5 said the provincial carbon tax has negatively affected their finances

Countries where governments have imposed fees on carbon emissions haven't shown significant decline in carbon emissions.

Let's look at British Columbia. In 2008 they were one of the first provinces to implement the tax. The carbon tax is currently \$65/ton, a level deemed to be effective for the tax. Data shows, however, that carbon emissions have actually not changed much since the tax was implemented.

In 2021, the gross greenhouse gas emissions in B.C. were only 2.8% lower than the 2007 baseline year, 14 years later. During this same time period, we must keep in mind that there was a noted decrease in 2020 emissions which was attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic, and that the 2021 data represents a time period still somewhat affected by the impacts of the pandemic. Even still, a rebound or increase of 1% in greenhouse gas emissions was observed in 2021 from the low 2020 levels.

During the years that the tax was in place for the entire year, from 2009 to 2014, greenhouse gas emissions from taxed sources rose by a total of 4.3%. During this same time period, emissions from non-taxed sources fell by a total of 2.1%.

Carbon taxes in BC have become quite controversial. A 2023 poll showed that: "More than 3-in-5 (62%) of British Columbians say the carbon tax has negatively affected the finances of their household, up 26 points since 2020."

Sources:

British Columbia's Carbon Tax

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/environment/climate-change/clean-economy/carbon-tax>

Trends in Greenhouse Gas Emissions in B.C. (1990-2021)

<https://www.env.gov.bc.ca/soe/indicators/sustainability/ghg-emissions.html>

The British Columbia Carbon Tax A Failed Experiment in Market-Based Solutions to Climate Change

[https://www.foodandwaterwatch.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/rpt\\_1609\\_carbontax\\_web17011.pdf](https://www.foodandwaterwatch.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/rpt_1609_carbontax_web17011.pdf)

Global News - October 25, 2023, B.C. Residents Split on Future of Provincial Carbon Tax: Poll  
<https://globalnews.ca/news/10049013/bc-split-future-provincial-carbon-tax/>

ResearchCo Poll - October 25, 2023, British Columbians Divided on Future of Provincial Carbon Tax

<https://researchco.ca/2023/10/25/bc-carbon-tax/>

FiveThirtyEight's Pollster Ratings - March 13, 2023, Research Co. Rating: 90% Accuracy

<https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/pollster-ratings/research-co/>

CBC News - Nov 8, 2023. Why Everyone's Fighting Over The Carbon Tax (again) | About That  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cPZcPtomehQ>

Over half of Canadians want carbon tax removed from all residential heating: poll

<https://vancouver.citynews.ca/2023/11/20/canada-carbon-tax-heating/>

Surveys, Carbon Tax Relief

<https://leger360.com/surveys/carbon-tax-relief/>

Table ES-4 **GHG Emissions by Province and Territory, Selected Years**

Year	GHG Emissions (Mt CO <sub>2</sub> eq)							Change (%)
	2005	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2005-2019
<b>GHG Total (Canada)</b>	<b>739</b>	<b>723</b>	<b>723</b>	<b>707</b>	<b>716</b>	<b>728</b>	<b>730</b>	<b>-1.1%</b>
NL	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	5.4%
PE	2.0	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.8	-14%
NS	23	17	17	16	16	17	16	-30%
NB	20	13	14	14	13	13	12	-38%
QC	88	79	79	79	81	83	84	-4.4%
ON	206	164	163	161	158	163	163	-21%
MB	21	21	21	21	22	23	23	10%
SK	68	74	76	74	76	76	75	10%
AB	235	278	278	264	271	272	276	17%
BC	63	60	59	62	63	66	66	4.3%
YT	0.57	0.50	0.53	0.53	0.56	0.64	0.69	22%
NT	1.6	1.5	1.7	1.6	1.3	1.4	1.4	-16%
NU	0.58	0.70	0.64	0.74	0.75	0.75	0.73	25%

Note: Totals may not add up due to rounding.

National Inventory Report 1990–2019: Greenhouse Gas Sources and Sinks in Canada – Executive Summary 2021 Edition

Note: This slide was skipped in the recorded presentation due to 15 minute time constraint.

This table is from Canada's National Inventory Report shows emissions levels for each Province from 2005 to 2019. You can see that British Columbia emissions increased during this time period 4.3%.

Additional Note: Other factors unrelated to carbon taxes occurred in provinces with notable emissions reductions. For example, New Brunswick and Ontario did not implement the carbon tax until 2019. During the time period shown on this chart, both Provinces closed coal-fire plants. Northwest Territories also began the carbon tax in 2019. Nova Scotia began the carbon tax in 2023.

Sources:

NATIONAL INVENTORY REPORT 1990 –2019: GREENHOUSE GAS SOURCES AND SINKS IN CANADA CANADA'S SUBMISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

National Inventory Report 1990–2019: Greenhouse Gas Sources and Sinks in Canada – Executive Summary 2021 Edition [Canada.ca/ghg-inventory](https://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2021/eccc/En81-4-1-2019-eng.pdf)

[https://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection\\_2021/eccc/En81-4-1-2019-eng.pdf](https://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2021/eccc/En81-4-1-2019-eng.pdf) (at p.12)

Canada Carbon Tax Began in 2019:

<https://globalnews.ca/news/5115420/carbon-tax-kicks-in-provinces-canada/>

Carbon Pricing in Canada: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carbon\\_pricing\\_in\\_Canada](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carbon_pricing_in_Canada)

Coal in Canada: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coal\\_in\\_Canada](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coal_in_Canada)

## This is What Climate Leadership Looks Like



Oct 2023: New measures to lower energy bills for Canadians enacted to provide more time and new support\* to help Canadians to transition to cleaner, more affordable home heating options. These measures include:

- **Three-year carbon tax exemption for heating oil** to provide targeted relief to rural and low-income households,
- **Making the average heat pump free** for low- to median-income Canadians, and,
- **Incentivizing the switch to heat pumps with \$250 upfront payments** for low- to median-income Canadians.

\*Purchase and installation can be a barrier, with many systems well over \$10,000

Realizing that they've put the cart before the horse, policy makers in Canada now concede that the carbon tax is creating barriers that prohibit transitioning to clean energy.

Acknowledging that the carbon tax on heating oil was punishing families without providing a viable way to transition to cleaner choices, in October 2023, the Canadian government **removed heating oil for 3 years from the carbon tax**. This was following public pressure from the Atlantic province, that uses oil as a prominent heating source for their region.

In addition to removing the tax on heating oil for 3 years, the government announced that they will be offering a program to make the average heat pump free for low and median income Canadians to help them make the transition to cleaner, more affordable home heating. This is a great example of how government can lead and provide the necessary incentives and support for the transition that is needed.

Sources:

Department of Finance Canada, Lowering Energy Bills for Canadians Across the Country  
<https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/news/2023/10/lowering-energy-bills-for-canadians-across-the-country.html>

CBC News - Nov 8, 2023. Why Everyone's Fighting Over The Carbon Tax (again) | About That  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cPZcPtomehQ>



## DECADE OF DECISIVENESS

1969 – National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)  
1970 – Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Created  
1970 – Clean Air Act (Extension). Major rewrite of CAA  
1970 – Occupational Safety and Health Act  
1970 – Lead-Based Paint Poisoning Prevention Act  
1970 – Environmental Quality Improvement Act  
1972 – Federal Water Pollution Control Amendments  
1972 – Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act  
1972 – Marine Protection, Research, and Sanctuaries Act  
1973 – Endangered Species Act  
1974 – Safe Drinking Water Act  
1975 – Hazardous Materials Transportation Act  
1976 – Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA)  
1976 – Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA)  
1977 – Clean Water Act. Amended FWPCA of 1972.  
1977 – Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act  
1978 – National Energy Conservation Policy Act  
1980 – CERCLA - Created the Superfund program.



1970s U.S. postage stamp block



A carbon tax doesn't make polluters pay for greenhouse gas pollution. It makes end-users pay. A regulatory solution, that phases out fossil fuel extraction and use, can and has been successful in the past to penalize those who are responsible for the problem, not everyone else.

Carbon Cashback proponents however say that a ban or prohibition on fossil fuels is politically untenable. However, history doesn't support that theory. Back in the 60s we had a similar environmental pollution crisis with massive fish die offs, rivers on fire, and a depleting ozone layer. In response, Congress passed a series of environmental laws like the Clean Air and Clean Water Acts, with strict mandates that penalize polluters. These laws have been extremely effective in turning around a lot of our environment problems into the 2000s.

Unfortunately politicians have been shifting away from proven successful regulatory mandates to embrace market-based solutions, that places the burden on consumers instead of industry. Their message to consumers is, you can shop your way out of our problems just make the right choices. But the problem is, this creates inequalities and an undue burden on consumers, because they don't control the choices that they have, industry and government do. And this market-based approach has resulted in 40 years of massive income inequality and environmental injustice.

So this notion that a ban or prohibition on the use of fossil fuels is politically untenable doesn't hold up. In 2022 California passed a law prohibiting the sale of new gas-powered cars after 2035. Following California's lead, 11 additional states have also committed to gas car phaseouts by 2035. Washington has gone a step further, enacting a law with a target of 2030 that all new cars to be electric, with a mandate for all government planning meet the target.

Source: International Phaseout of Gas Cars: <https://coltura.org/world-gasoline-phaseouts/>

## Our Goal is to Cut CO2 Emissions

Examples of actions that would give us the biggest ‘bang for our buck” and lead to a just phase out and energy transition:

- Permitting reform to facilitate timely rooftop solar deployment
- Rebates for energy efficiency, EVs & EV charging systems, solar & energy storage installation
- Low interest loans for low/moderate income families towards installing clean energy systems

Note: This slide was skipped in recorded presentation due to 15 minute time constraint.

**The solution to addressing climate change, in earnest, is not complicated: We must decrease CO2 emissions significantly and rapidly. Incremental, polluter-friendly approaches, such as carbon taxes, will never bring about a stable and sustainable future.**

Examples of actions that would give us the biggest ‘bang for our buck” and lead to a just phase out and energy transition:

- Permitting reform to facilitate timely rooftop solar deployment
- Rebates for energy efficiency, EVs & EV charging systems, solar & energy storage installation
- Low interest loans for low/moderate income families towards installing clean energy systems

## Our Goal is to Cut CO2 Emissions, (continued)

Examples of actions that would give us the biggest ‘bang for our buck” and lead to a just phase out and energy transition:

- Subsidizing/supporting traditional Hawaiian regenerative agricultural methods and crops
- Renewable-ready infrastructure on all new developments
- 4-day work week and/or transition government offices to remote work to reduce both traffic and emissions
- Free bus passes

Note: This slide was skipped in recorded presentation due to 15 minute time constraint.

Examples of actions that would give us the biggest ‘bang for our buck” and lead to a just phase out and energy transition (***continued***):

- Subsidizing/supporting traditional Hawaiian regenerative agricultural methods and crops
- Renewable-ready infrastructure on all new developments
- 4-day work week and/or transition government offices to remote work to reduce both traffic and emissions
- Free bus passes

## Actions for Atmospheric Cancer Stage 4?

**Global temperature in 2023 was 1.48°C above pre-industrial times.\***

Carbon Cashback Bill anticipated impacts:

- Projected emissions reductions: only 0.5% per year
- Financially hurting families/local business/farms despite claims
- Punishes consumers without providing a viable way to transition to cleaner choices. **Emissions don't fall, but prices rise.**
- Climate-harming energy sources will get a competitive advantage

**We are passed the time we can wait for the market to have an effect.**



\*Data from European climate agency Copernicus

To circle back to the beginning of this discussion, we are in the middle of a situation where we have Atmospheric Cancer and we are in Stage 4. Our life support system is showing signs of collapsing all around us. 2023 was the world's hottest year, shattering previous records.

Global temperature in 2023 has already risen to nearly 1.5°C. Scientists have already described how unfriendly a 1.5 degree world will be.

At this point in the climate crisis, a half of a percent per year reduction in CO2 emissions is too little too late—especially considering the additional negative effects expected, such as financially hurting families and local business including farms, punishing consumers before viable alternatives are available or the infrastructure has been built out. This means emissions don't fall, but prices rise. It is also very concerning that Carbon Cashback is giving climate-harming energy sources a competitive advantage.

We are passed the time we can wait for the market to have an effect. That ship has sailed. We know what needs to be done. We just need to build the political will to do it.

Sources:

Hottest Year in History:

<https://www.science.org/content/article/even-warmer-expected-2023-was-hottest-year-record>

Sources for bulleted items noted on previous slides.

# QUOTES

Note: Slides with quotes skipped in recorded presentation due to 15 minute time constraint.

Natalie Mebane, Associate Director of Policy, 350.org:

*"Carbon pricing by its very nature is inadequate for fighting climate change, because it allows companies to continue to produce and consume fossil fuels and doesn't account for the environmental justice implications of their continued operations, such as communities of color that are affected by pollution from refineries and power plants. It also increases energy prices, which can be a disproportionate burden on people with the lowest incomes.*

*Anything that does not stop the burning of fossil fuels, and does not have a complete clean energy transition and revolution, where we're not reliant on fossil fuels for any part of our economy, isn't going to actually do anything."*

Kathy Eglund, NAACP National Board of Directors

*“I will not sell or exchange my life and my health for a check. To me, that would be the same as authorizing someone to pollute me...Just to make matters simple for people who are very aggressive and want to tell me how I don’t understand how this is going to benefit me. Nothing taking away my life and my health will ever benefit me, so there’s no explanation that you can ever give me that will make me support any of this no matter what name you call it.”*

Annie Leonard, Greenpeace USA

*“What does stopping oil, coal, and gas at the source look like? It means no new drilling, no new oil and gas pipelines, and no new mining. Proposals for carbon taxes and cap-and-trade have taken up too much climate-solution oxygen in recent years, and so far they have been flimsy half measures porous with loopholes. They come nowhere close to meeting the scale of the crisis.”*



**The End**



Image credit: [Ryan De Seixas](#)