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**Sent:** Tue 16/10/2018 2:05:31 PM (UTC)

**Subject:** READ: Washington NO on 1631 | News Clips (10.15.18)

Cliff Mass Climate and Weather Blog - If You Worry about Climate Change and Care About the Environment, Vote No on I-1631 (10.14.18).pdf

The Daily News (Op-Ed) - A carbon tax is a good idea--so long as it doesn't come with industry handouts (10.14.18).pdf

The Everett Herald (Op-Ed) - Viewpoints- Will I-1631's carbon fee help or hinder (10.14.18).pdf

The Everett Herald (Editorial) - Even with flaws, I-1631 provides climate solutions (10.15.18).pdf

MyNorthwest - A climatologist's argument against I-1631's carbon fee (10.15.18).pdf

Axios - Want to tax carbon emissions Just don't call it a tax (10.15.18).pdf

The Seattle Times - Setting fires to control wildfires- a profound change takes hold in Washington state (10.14.18).pdf

The Lewiston Tribune (Editorial) - With time running short, you can't afford to vote no (10.14.18) .pdf

Bloomberg - Washington to Decide on First-of-Its-Kind U.S. Carbon Fee (10.15.18).pdf

# Redacted - First Amendment

Tom

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**NO ON 1631 | DAILY NEWS CLIPS**

**IN-STATE DAILIES, TV or RADIO**

10/14/18

***The Daily News (Op-Ed)***

*A carbon tax is a good idea—so long as it doesn't come with industry handouts*

Source

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10/14/18

***The Seattle Times***

*Setting fires to control wildfires: a profound change takes hold in Washington state*

Hal Bernton

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10/14/18

***The Everett Herald (Op-Ed)***

*Viewpoints: Will I-1631's carbon fee help or hinder?*

Cynthia Easterson & Steve Pendergrass

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10/14/18

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*With time running short, you can't afford to vote no*

Marty Trillhaase

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***MyNorthwest***

*A climatologist's argument against I-1631's carbon fee*

MyNorthwest Staff

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10/15/18

***The Everett Herald (Editorial)***

*Even with flaws, I-1631 provides climate solutions*

The Everett Herald Editorial Board

[Source](#)

**BLOGS**

10/14/18

***Cliff Mass Weather and Climate Blog***

*If You Worry About Climate Change and Care about the Environment, Vote No on I-1631*

Cliff Mass

[Source](#)

**NATIONAL NEWS**

10/15/18

***Axios***

*Want to tax carbon emissions? Just don't call it a tax*

Amy Harder

[Source](#)

10/15/18

***Bloomberg***

*Washington to Decide on First-of-Its-Kind US Carbon Fee*

Eric Roston and Jim Efstathiou Jr

[Source](#)

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10/14/18

***The Daily News (Op-Ed)***

*A carbon tax is a good idea—so long as it doesn't come with industry handouts*

[Source](#)



Exxon Mobil made a bit of a splash Tuesday when it announced a \$1-million, two-year donation to the Republican-led Americans for Carbon Dividends, an organization pushing for a national tax to help curtail emissions of atmosphere-warming carbon. A carbon tax is aimed at making the burning of fossil fuels — which releases carbon — more expensive, and thus directing consumer behavior away from carbon-spewing energy and driving investment toward carbon-free alternatives. It's a sound approach, one this page endorsed more than a decade ago, and better than the related cap-and-trade plans, which California has used since 2012.

But the plan that Exxon Mobil is throwing its money at — pocket change, really, for a corporation that made nearly \$20 billion last year — is less than it seems. Called the Baker-Schultz plan after two of its authors, former Republican secretaries of State James A. Baker III and George P. Schultz, the plan calls for gradually increasing the per-ton carbon tax to reduce the risk of market shock, and for returning the proceeds to consumers on a per-capita basis through the Social Security Administration. Everyone gets the same amount of cash, but those who use less carbon-emitting energy will pay less tax — giving them a powerful incentive to conserve. So far, all good. And a set rate helps companies better anticipate their costs; businesses like stability and predictability.

But there's always a but, it seems. The Baker-Schultz plan also includes a waiver that would let oil companies and other emitters off the hook for past acts contributing to global warming, preempting the many lawsuits filed against them. And it would undo the Clean Power Plan and other federal regulations covering carbon dioxide emissions. That makes this sound less like a smart plan to reduce carbon than a toxic quid pro quo — “OK, we'll go for a carbon tax if these lawsuits go away and we get sharper deregulation.” Another plan, pushed by the Citizens Climate Lobby and other groups, would similarly escalate the per-ton tax over time and return the proceeds in a per-capita dividend, without the corporate giveaways. That's a better option.

Whatever approach might ultimately gain traction, it will be a useless gesture unless the tax is sufficiently high to compel changes in producer and consumer behavior. How much is too little? How much is too much? We're not going to pretend we know — there are experts who can make that calculation. But this is an area in which compromise isn't much of an option. As the recent Intergovernmental Panel of Climate Change warned, without near-immediate and drastic action to curtail the rise of carbon and other greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, mankind faces a dire environmental future. Rising seas, more severe weather patterns — a lesson just reinforced by Hurricane Michael — deep agricultural impacts and worse droughts and flooding.

We've known about this problem for decades. Swedish scientist Svante Arrhenius predicted nearly 120 years ago (building on earlier work by Irish-born scientist John Tyndall) that warmer temperatures would follow increased levels of human-generated atmospheric carbon. Over the subsequent few decades scientists recorded changes in carbon levels, and by the early 1970s there were international calls for research into the phenomenon. The world — particularly the industrialized world — has known this reckoning was coming yet has done little more than wave at it. It's like a homeowner who ignores the leak in the upstairs bathroom until the house's structural integrity begins to get compromised. Well, the bones of this building are weakening.

The problem confronting us is that understanding the threat and the available solutions — both technological and behavioral — does nothing for us unless we find a way to overcome the enormous political hurdles posed by self-interested polluters, self-centered consumers and the climate skeptics controlling the levers of government. The science and the already evident effects of global warming haven't moved the needle on global action enough to stop the needle on the global thermometer.

It might be tempting to sigh and give up, but that would be just as foolish as continuing the disastrous policies that are imperiling the health of the very environment that makes life possible. There's an adage that “it's an ill bird that fouls its own nest.” If so, we're some rather sick birds.

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10/14/18

***The Seattle Times***

*Setting fires to control wildfires: a profound change takes hold in Washington state*

Hal Bernton

[Source](#)

ROSLYN, Kittitas County — On Sept. 2, 2017, volunteer firefighter Chris Martin spread the word to his neighbors. The Jolly Mountain fire was raging nearby. Pack up important possessions and prepare to leave at a moment's notice

The flames never made it to town. People stayed put, but many now live with a new sense of vulnerability.

“This was a game changer for us,” said Martin, a Roslyn volunteer firefighter who handed out the evacuation notices.

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This month, on a crisp fall day, Martin once again was trying to protect the town. But this time, instead of warning of a fire, he joined 30 other men and women in setting fire to 32 ridge-top acres he owns above Roslyn.

This burn is intended to consume downed wood, brush and low-lying limbs, helping create a defensible space where firefighters could make a stand should there be another threatening summer blaze.

In the more arid ponderosa-pine forests of Central and Eastern Washington, these controlled burns have emerged as a key tactic in protecting communities from wildfires, which are expected to torch more acreage as climate change — spurred by greenhouse-gas pollution from fossil fuels — warms the region. After more than a century of scrambling each summer to put out fires, the push to light them in the fall and spring represents a profound change.

U.S. Forest Service officials are eager to expand these cool-season burns on federal lands, where they have been carried out in combination with thinning accomplished with chain saws and mechanical brush cutters.

This work is no cure-all for the smoke that blanketed the Puget Sound region in August. But Forest Service officials say it could help Northwest firefighters gain better control of summer blazes, and do so from safer spaces.

Their enthusiasm is boosted by fresh reports from the wildfire front lines.

On Aug. 11, crews say some Chelan County homes along the Entiat River were spared when the fast-moving Cougar Creek fire slowed and weakened after hitting forest that had been previously thinned and burned. Five days later, other crews deployed to an area 11 miles north of Winthrop — where earlier efforts had reduced the forest-fuel load — blocked the rapid advance of the McLeod fire.

“Once the flame length drops down from 100 to 200 feet to 3 or 4 feet, then we can do something about that,” said Rob Allen, fire staff officer with the Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest.

There also is new momentum for these burns in Olympia.

Washington Public Lands Commissioner Hilary Franz, elected in 2016, is pushing to launch, as early as next year, controlled burns on state Department of Natural Resources (DNR) lands, where forest managers for years have balked at such actions.

Franz also is trying to ease long-standing regulatory hurdles within DNR. The agency, in consultation with the Department of Ecology, approves permits to burn on federal, state and private land, but often turns them down out of concern about smoke pollution reaching communities.

“I’m a big supporter of prescribed fire. It’s absolutely essential,” Franz said.

Some local governments also want to get involved.

In Roslyn, in the aftermath of the Jolly Mountain fire, the City Council approved thinning a 300-acre municipal forest right at the edge of town, and plans to follow up with burns.

“I believe that Roslyn is more than willing to put up with some smoke to make sure it is safer,” said Roslyn Mayor Brent Hals.

#### Fire funding

The best way to learn the skills for these burns is through hands-on experience. Over the past decade, The Nature Conservancy, in a cooperative program with federal agencies, has launched training sessions on grasslands and forests around the country, including two during the last two years in Washington state that also have involved DNR and the Washington Prescribed Fire Council.

The men and women who gathered in Roslyn came from Washington and three other western states as well as British Columbia, where wildfires this year flared on more than 3 million acres, generating much of the smoke that drifted south into Northwest communities in August.

Fire crews from four states and British Columbia gather for an update on burn plans as they attend a hands-on training session at a

site near Roslyn. (Steve Ringman / The Seattle Times)

Fire crews from four states and British Columbia gather for an update on burn plans as they attend a hands-on training session at a site near Roslyn. (Steve Ringman / The Seattle Times)

“A lot of fire-science types are saying we need to do more prescribed burning, at the landscape level — large-scale units,” said Mike Morrow, fuel-management specialist from Cranbrook, B.C. “There is a lot of concern right now from the tourism industry ... if this becomes the new normal, where B.C. is smoked out every year.”

In the Pacific Northwest, these burns taken place in lower- to mid-elevation forests east of the Cascade crest where frequent, but relatively low-intensity fires historically occurred every five to 30 years. That’s a big contrast to the much less frequent fire intervals — often a century or more — in the wetter forests of Western Washington.

In the dry-side forests, these wildfires helped to clear out the forest floor while sparing many of the bigger trees, such as the ponderosa pine, that evolved with thick bark that enable them to withstand more heat.

Some of these fires were started by lightning. Northwest tribes also set them, in part, to promote the growth of grasses and other shrubs favored by wildlife.

But in the 20th century, fire suppression enabled big buildups of brush and small trees that serve as ladder fuels. All this wood makes fast-moving flames harder to contain.

“Our people used fire as a management tool to improve forest health ... when the forest began to be managed by the federal government, those traditional ways were stopped,” said Rodney Cawston, of the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, last week in Tumwater where he joined Franz in asking for more money to fight fires and restore forests.

A state plan calls for thinning and prescribed burns during the next 20 years on some 1.25 million acres in Eastern Washington, which would require a greatly expanded effort likely costing hundreds of million dollars.

Franz last week asked the Legislature to approve more than \$17 million to finance forest restoration for the two-year period beginning July 1, 2019.

Another source of money for prescribed burns could be Initiative 1631, which calls for a carbon fee on fossil fuels. If voters approve the ballot measure next month, some of the revenue would be invested in forest health.

The money available through the initiative, “is much greater than what the state has been allocating,” said Mo McBroom, of The Nature Conservancy, which was involved in the drafting of the ballot measure, and with \$1.2 million in cash and in-kind contributions, also ranks as the biggest financial backer to date.

Too warm, too wet

Even if plenty of dollars are available, pulling off large-scale burns is no sure thing.

Prescribed fires have relatively narrow weather windows in the spring and fall when they can be carried out safely and effectively.

When it’s too warm or too windy, the risks are too great for an out-of-control blaze. Such incidents are rare, but can be disastrous. Back in 2000, a National Park Service-prescribed fire in New Mexico, intended to burn 900 acres, whipped out of control, scorching 40,000 acres and destroying hundreds of homes.

When it is too moist, they don’t generate enough heat to get the job done. So even if a crew is ready to go, the burn may have to be called off.

The challenges were evident during the Roslyn training, where crews focused on parts of a 160-acre tract that Martin acquired to conserve from development.

On the evening of Oct. 2, it rained. The next day, after the crews waited around for hours, the burn boss concluded the forest was still wet. So the burn was called off.

On two earlier scheduled training days, the land was dry. But state officials limited the burns to no more than 8 acres due to concerns about the smoke pollution.

“We felt like we had good (smoke) lift, good dispersion,” Martin said. “ But they’re sitting in Olympia saying ‘no.’ ”

On Oct. 4, the crew finally got a green light from the state for a full-scale effort on a day with plenty of sunshine.

The job began in late morning and lasted until after dark.

Martin joined the men and women walking through the brush. They spread the flames with the aid of drip torches fueled by a mix of gasoline and diesel. The fire, for the most part, moved slowly, leaving behind charred earth and smoking stumps of old trees logged many decades ago.

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10/14/18

***The Everett Herald (Op-Ed)***

*Viewpoints: Will I-1631's carbon fee help or hinder?*

Cynthia Easterson & Steve Pendergrass

[Source](#)

I-1631 will protect the environment and invest in clean energy solutions.

By Cynthia Easterson

For The Herald

For more than 100 years Audubon has proven a strong advocate for birds and the habitats needed to sustain healthy populations.

As one of Snohomish County’s largest environmental non-profits, Pilchuck Audubon Society also cares deeply about families, friends and neighbors who are in need of clean water, clean air and healthy communities. We recognize that the threat of climate change is not only hazardous to birds but to our children, grandchildren and future generations.

The science is clear — greenhouse gases in our atmosphere are changing our climate faster than people or wildlife can adapt. A groundbreaking report, published by Audubon scientists in 2014, revealed that rising temperatures are curtailing the range of 588 North American bird species, causing 314 of those species to be threatened or endangered by climate change. In Washington State, 189 species of birds are at risk.

To protect these bird populations and support the communities that hold them dear, Washington state needs to quickly move to a 100 percent fossil-free energy system. Investing in clean energy solutions, healthy forests and resilient communities is critical to getting us to that goal.

For these reasons, Pilchuck Audubon Society supports immediate progress on climate action and strongly urges you to vote yes on Initiative 1631.

I-1631 is endorsed by a broad coalition of Washingtonians looking for practical solutions to climate change, including leading scientists, environmental and clean-energy advocates, health professionals, businesses, labor unions, faith leaders, communities of color and tribal nations.

I-1631 is an important first step to ensure clean air and clean water for everyone in Washington and gives us the chance to pass on a healthier state to the next generation. Fees collected by I-1631 would put our state on a carbon-free trajectory by directing 70 percent of the revenue toward clean energy investments. The rest of the fee revenue supports clean water and healthy forest initiatives. It would enhance vibrant, sustainable communities — especially those most affected by climate change and the much-needed clean energy transition.

Audubon Washington, the state chapter of National Audubon, has taken a lead on supporting this and other climate policies aimed at reducing Washington’s carbon pollution by 50 million metric tons by 2050, while investing millions to increase the resilience of our water and forests to the impacts of climate change.

This includes restoring and protecting estuaries, fisheries and marine shoreline habitats vital for birds to survive. It also includes programs to improve forest health and reduce vulnerability to changes in hydrology, insect and disease infestation, wildfires and

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drought. This is critical support that will protect important bird habitats now and in the future.

Pilchuck Audubon Society has joined other chapters across the state to lobby our legislature and Gov. Jay Inslee to act on climate change and pass solutions that will reduce carbon emissions. Despite these efforts, the state has failed to pass any substantive climate policies for the past 12 years. We have no more time to wait.

It is easy to forget that this planet is not simply a commodity to be exploited, but a community to which we all belong. Where birds survive, people thrive. We know that many of our most beloved bird populations are already declining due to climate change, but even more important are the rising impacts to people from declining water quality, increased drought and massive forest fires, and worsening air pollution.

A yes vote on I-1631 supports healthy habitats for birds and wildlife, and healthy places for all of us to live, work and play. A yes vote on I-1631 says we care about future generations. A yes vote on I-1631 lets us work together to build a new clean energy economy, good paying jobs and a sustainable future for all. A yes vote on I-1631 says we must act on climate now.

Cynthia Easterson is president of the Pilchuck Audubon Society, based in Snohomish.

I-1631 will add to the costs of energy and result in job losses.

By Steve Pendergrass

For The Herald

As president of the Iron Workers District Council of the Pacific Northwest, it is my responsibility to protect the good-paying jobs of our union's hard-working brothers and sisters.

These jobs generate honest wages for an honest day's work, provide benefits and health care to our members and their families and safeguard the living standards of our working- and middle-class communities. Our membership, both past and present, have fought long and hard to ensure our union jobs are safe, inclusive, fair and equitable. And so, I take very seriously any threat to what our members have earned.

While reducing carbon emissions is an admirable goal, I believe Initiative 1631, if passed, will have a damaging effect on our area's current era of growth and prosperity, and eventually cost hard-working people good jobs.

In Washington state, and especially in Snohomish County, we have all grown tired of excessive taxation without anything to show for our money. Our property taxes have skyrocketed, our vehicle tabs will soon border on unaffordable, our cost of living continues to increase; all while serious problems such as homelessness and drug addiction continue to plague our communities. The tax money is there, but the government accountability is not.

Adding yet another tax — or fee — to our community, this time directly targeting employers that provide good paying jobs in the industrial and building trades, will have harmful consequences for our state's workers. The large burden of this fee could mean the elimination of essential jobs, or see employers leave the state altogether. I also believe this fee will deter companies considering Washington as a future home from doing business in our state.

Beyond the loss of jobs, it's clear the working people of Washington will also bear the brunt of this fee at the gas pump and through increases in utility bills. Should I-1631 pass, we can expect the price of gas to jump an estimated 14 cents in the first year of implementation and continue to rise into the foreseeable future. Our gas and electric bills will also go up, putting an undue burden on low-income and working families to shoulder the costs. Iron workers are working-class people, and we can't in good conscience support an initiative that will make it even more expensive to live in Washington state.

Should this initiative pass, and the money be collected, who decides where that money goes? I challenge anyone who supports I-1631 to clearly answer that question. The reality is that the funds from the carbon fee will be allocated by a public oversight board made up of unelected appointees and members, each with little or no accountability to the voters of this state. To actually get anything done, proposals for spending the money will have to go through a dizzying maze of consultations, be reviewed and discussed by numerous panels, committees and sub-committees, and also satisfy several defined rules, criteria and processes. It shouldn't be up to an unaccountable group of people mired in bureaucracy to decide how best to spend the hard-earned dollars collected from this community's taxpayers.

We understand that carbon pollution is an important issue that needs to be addressed. But we believe there should be a way to fight for the future without sacrificing the present. To hastily pass an initiative in the name of a righteous cause, while at the same time jeopardizing the livelihoods of working people is contradictory and irresponsible.

We believe we can fight climate change and carbon pollution without jeopardizing jobs, without burdening working families with increased utility costs, and without handing over our money to an unelected board with no accountability to the public. We believe I-1631 falls short of its admirable goals, and we must instead focus our energy on a better way forward. That is why the Northwest Iron Workers Council soundly opposes I-1631 and encourages all our members and fellow citizens to do the same.

Steve Pendergrass is president of the Iron Workers District Council of the Pacific Northwest, based in Edmonds.

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10/14/18

***The Lewiston Tribune (Editorial)***

*With time running short, you can't afford to vote no*

Marty Trillhaase

[Source](#)

In 2016, it was easy to reject Washington Initiative 732.

A response to climate change, I-732's carbon tax could not draw a unified response from its own base. If organized labor, Democrats and environmentalists could not agree, why would anyone want to follow?

Nearly 60 percent voted against it.

Two years later, virtually all those same groups are part of a broad-based coalition that is solidly behind a new carbon fee measure - Initiative 1631 - at a time when the situation has become more dire.

At its core, I-1631 draws on the same general premise: Discourage the use of fossil fuels by raising the price. It would begin in 2020 with a \$15 per metric ton fee and escalate about \$2 per ton plus inflation each year thereafter until greenhouse emission standards are met in 2035.

Rather than a straightforward tax shift - I-732 would have used carbon fees to pay down sales and B&O taxes - this measure proposes to allocate an estimated \$1 billion annually toward incentivizing cleaner energy sources:

70 percent would pay for investments in technologies that reduce air pollution.

25 percent would go toward cleaner water and healthier forests.

5 percent would underwrite efforts to help communities adversely affected by climate change.

At last \$50 million would be devoted toward helping fossil fuel workers who are displaced by the transition toward greener technologies.

With a few notable exceptions, including former state Auditor Brian Sonntag and University of Washington professor of atmospheric sciences Cliff Mass, the opposition comes from where you'd expect - the oil industry.

It has reportedly shelled out more than \$22 million so far on an advertising campaign that takes aim at the following:

Higher fuel prices - Depending on whose figures are used, it could lead to a 14-cent per gallon gasoline spike.

Fairness - While consumers take a hit, some of Washington's biggest and most politically influential industries, such as aircraft, maritime, pulp and paper and agriculture, are exempt.

Accountability - A board of 15 gubernatorial appointees, not the Legislature, decides how to allocate the funds.

Practicality - It may not deliver the desired reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.

When you get into those kinds of weeds, the default position is to vote no - and wait for a better plan to emerge, possibly from the Washington Legislature.

Clearly, that's what the oil industry-financed campaign hopes you'll do.

But in the two years since voters rejected the earlier attempt to reign in greenhouse gases, the situation has become more serious.



Two years ago, you had President Barack Obama's acknowledgment of climate change and a commitment to follow the 2015 Paris Agreement..

Now you have President Donald Trump's assertion that climate change is a hoax, his commitment to ramp up coal production and his intended withdrawal from the Paris accords.

Two years ago, you thought you were protecting the world for your descendants.

Now it's a matter of naked self-interest.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change says global warming is occurring on a scale much greater than earlier understood.

It took a 1-degree Celsius increase to unleash violent storms, forest fires and droughts. But within as little as 11 years - and certainly within 20 years - warming will reach 2 degrees Celsius.

The initiative's backers are asking a lot of the people of Washington. How can one state in one corner of North America alter a global crisis?

Ask instead: What is the alternative?

To wait on a Legislature that has deadlocked on enacting its own carbon tax?

To hope that the 2020 election brings a new administration more committed to saving the planet?

To believe a supermajority of Americans will rise up and overcome gerrymandered Republican congressional districts, a Senate where the voice of rural America is amplified and an Electoral College that has thwarted the popular vote twice in five elections?

Initiative campaigns exist precisely for times such as these. When the elected representatives become unable or unwilling to act, people can take charge of the levers of making their own laws.

The results frequently are imperfect. I-1631 is no exception.

At least it offers this promise: If people in the Evergreen State can embrace change, can progressive states such as California, Oregon or Minnesota be far behind?

"In the spirit of the proverb, 'We don't inherit the Earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children,' it's our responsibility to take the lessons we've learned from the past to lead by example and shape a brighter future," former Interior Secretary Sally Jewell and former Environmental Protection Administrator William Ruckelshaus wrote recently in the Seattle Times. "By passing I-1631, Washingtonians can help create a roadmap for progress that will make future generations proud."

Vote yes and your grandchildren might thank you.

Vote no and you may want that vote back in 11 years.

I-1631 is far from perfect. No ballot measure ever is. You can either take a reasonable step forward or stand still when time is not your ally.

Vote yes. - M.T.

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10/15/18

**MyNorthwest**

*A climatologist's argument against I-1631's carbon fee*

MyNorthwest Staff

[Source](#)

Initiative 1631, to appear on the upcoming November ballot, aims to impose a fee on carbon polluters in the state while taking action against climate change.

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But if you truly care about climate change, and doing something about it, then you should reject I-1631, according to one Seattle climate scientist.

“I think it’s a very bad idea,” University of Washington Atmospheric Sciences Professor Cliff Mass said. “I think that anybody who is concerned about climate change should vote against 1631. It has a lot of very major flaws.”

It’s perhaps an unexpected argument against a solution to climate change from a climate expert fully aware of the consequences of a warming planet. But Mass argues that in order to make a difference regarding climate change, the entire nation needs to be on board. I-1631 is written in a way that will be extremely partisan, Mass says. As such, it will never be looked to as a model for the rest of America.

“It is written by a very narrow group of people, mainly people on the environmental left,” Mass said. “There’s no way that this could ever move to the rest of the country. We had a chance before with I-732, which was a revenue neutral carbon tax, and could have been bipartisan. But 1631 is so partisan, it will never serve as a model for the rest of the country. That is a problem right there.”

“Another problem is the carbon fee is way too low; it’s half of what 732 was,” he added. “So it’s not going to have a major impact. It’s also extremely regressive. The money isn’t given back; it’s used for special projects. So people with lower income will be the worst hit by this.”

Mass goes on to say that the proposal has the revenue managed by an un-elected body.

The initiative targets most carbon polluters in the state. I-1631 proposes to place a \$15 fee per metric ton of carbon, starting in 2020. That fee will increase by \$2 every year after that. The revenue would benefit environmental programs related to climate change. Critics have argued that it will cause higher costs for consumers.

#### I-1631 debate

Washington may get to see how I-1631’s carbon fee will work out. According to Crosscut, half of voters it polled were in favor of I-1631, and 14 percent were undecided. That’s far from any assurance the initiative will pass, but it is a higher approval rating than other carbon fee attempts. Crosscut notes that support for the initiative is higher than support for I-732, which Mass references. That initiative failed two years ago.

Prominent local figures have also come out in support of I-1631, such as Bill Gates, who authored a LinkedIn post arguing for its passage. Gates says I-1631 will encourage a clean energy business environment; provide a “market signal” to businesses contributing to climate change; and it will help other forms of energy flourish, such as hydropower and nuclear power.

Still, Mass says that the initiative’s flaws are too great to overcome. He strongly urges the state to pass a bipartisan, revenue neutral carbon fee.

“You tax carbon to change what people do, but give the money back to them,” Mass said. “You drop the sales tax or something like that. So people won’t be out of money, they just spend it differently.

“Another approach is that if you have a carbon fee, put the money where it is needed,” he added. “Right now, the money is thrown to this board and God knows what they spend it on. There are things that we really need. We need to fix our forests, thin them out. We need better mass transit. There are a lot of things we can do that will be helpful in a warming world. If the money was hardwired into these positive things, it would make it a lot more attractive.”

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10/15/18

***The Everett Herald (Editorial)***

*Even with flaws, I-1631 provides climate solutions*

The Everett Herald Editorial Board

[Source](#)

Two years ago, The Herald Editorial Board reluctantly advised a no vote on Initiative 732, which would have imposed a tax on carbon emissions of \$25 per metric ton with the trade-off that its revenue would have gone toward a penny reduction in the state

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sales tax to 5.5 cents on a \$1 purchase, from the current 6.5 cents.

The flaw, as we saw it then, was that there was no guarantee that the revenue from the carbon tax would sufficiently offset the expected losses to the state's general fund, coming at a time when lawmakers still had not figured out how to amply fund K-12 education.

Two years on — with tens of millions more tons of carbon pumped into the air of Washington state, and the recent release of a United Nation's scientific report on climate change — we now must weigh the need for immediate action to reduce carbon emissions against the potential flaws and consequences in the latest citizen initiative, I-1631.

The U.N. report: The United Nation's report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change — compiled by 91 scientists from 40 nations from more than 6,000 scientific studies — lowered the temperature threshold at which the world will see dire environmental effects from sea level rise; occurrence of drought, floods, wildfires and other severe weather events; loss of habitat and species; and reduction in crop harvests, predicting those effects at only a 1.5 degree Celsius (2.7 degree Fahrenheit) global increase rather than 2 degrees (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit), and hitting as early as 2040.

Offering some hope, the report concludes that it's possible to achieve in relatively short time the reductions in carbon emissions that will slow and even begin to reverse the rise in temperature and the resulting impacts. To get there it recommends a near end to the use of coal and a reduction in fossil fuel consumption and a price on carbon to encourage that reduction.

What's proposed: Initiative 1631 proposes just such a fee on carbon. It would charge some of the state's largest polluters a fee of \$15 per metric ton of carbon, increasing \$2 each year, plus inflation, until the state's existing goal for reducing greenhouse gases for 2035 is met and is on track to meet the 2050 reduction goal.

The revenue from the fee, estimated by the state at \$2.3 billion in the first five years, but eventually reaching as much as \$1 billion a year, would be used to fund a range of projects that themselves are intended to reduce carbon emissions through cleaner transportation options; promotion of solar, wind and other renewable sources of energy; work to improve the health of forests; projects that capture and store carbon; and programs to help disadvantaged communities make the adjustment away from fossil fuels.

Those projects would be selected by a 15-member public oversight panel, including governor appointees and state officials.

In a state where hydropower provides the greatest share of electrical energy, most of the carbon emissions in Washington state are the result of transportation and the vehicles that we drive. And among the pollution sources most effected by the carbon fee will be the refineries that produce the fuel we use.

Fatal flaws? The No on 1631 campaign — supported through more than \$20 million from the oil industry — has pointed to a host of what it says are fatal flaws in the initiative, even as the campaign admits the need for a reduction in carbon emissions. Among the flaws, it says, I-1631:

Would result in increased costs for gas — it predicts a 14-cent-a-gallon increase in 2020 when it goes into effect — and for home heating, imposing what amounts to a regressive tax that will disadvantage lower-income and working families and those in rural areas who must make long commutes and small businesses moving products;

Unfairly exempts some of the state's heaviest polluters;

Would allow an unelected board to choose which projects would receive financing with no accountability to the public; and

Provides no guarantee that it will result in meeting the goal of reducing annual carbon emissions by 20 million tons by 2035 and 50 million tons by 2050.

I-1631 supporters and others have answered those allegations.

Defending I-1631: Regarding the exempted industries, the state's single top polluter, a coal-fired power plant in Centralia, which emitted more than 5 million metric tons of carbon dioxide in 2016, was let off the hook because it had already agreed to stop burning coal as of 2025. The state's pulp and paper mills were exempted because they chiefly burn wood waste to power operations, a resource that, while it emits carbon dioxide, is considered renewable by the state through the replanting of timber which naturally captures carbon.

As to the board's accountability to the public, legislators supportive of the initiative say that the final decision on project funding will rest with lawmakers.

What of the everyday costs to the public? Opponents, last week, released a study that predicts that because of the increase in gas and other energy prices, the most families in the state can expect to pay about \$440 more a year.

I-1631 supporters were quick to point out that the study's authors have long provided questionable numbers for both the oil and tobacco industries.

Both sides will debate how much of an increase will result, but it's fair to assume that transportation and energy costs will increase. How else to discourage the use of fossil fuels than to increase their cost and make alternatives a more attractive option?

It's also fair to admit that for too many years we have been paying an uncounted cost for the pollution created by fossil fuels that has contributed to health problems for those with asthma, emphysema and other lung diseases; habitat and other environmental losses; and climate change itself.

The initiative's effectiveness in reducing carbon emissions also is hard to judge without knowing how motorists will adjust to an increase in fuel costs and what alternative energy projects and programs will be proposed and accepted. Truthfully, a starting point of more than \$15 a ton might have resulted in quicker carbon reductions.

There likely are flaws and unspecific language in the initiative, but none that can't be addressed by the Legislature after two years or with two-thirds approval. The Legislature has next year to address problems in the language before fees are first assessed in 2020.

A diamond in the rough: Even with its flaws and uncertainties, Initiative 1631 could have positive effects for the state, the nation and the globe:

As the first such carbon-reduction program in the nation, it could foster similar efforts in other states.

By encouraging development of solar, wind and other renewable resources, the state could become a hub for development of those technologies, creating tens of thousands of jobs that would offset job losses elsewhere, even without the investment the initiative pledges to make in job-retraining for displaced workers.

It will simply clear the air for all residents but particularly those who live in communities with clogged highways, fostering the development of cleaner and healthier transportation options.

And, after years of rejected proposals to address carbon emissions, I-1631 will begin to make an honest effort at reducing carbon emissions and taking seriously the threat of climate change.

We are past the point where we can wait for perfect; Washington voters should put us on the path toward good.

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10/14/18

***Cliff Mass Weather and Climate Blog***

*If You Worry About Climate Change and Care about the Environment, Vote No on I-1631*

Cliff Mass

[Source](#)

If you care about the environment, if you worry about global warming, and if this summer's smoke is of concern, you should vote against Washington State Initiative 1631.

If you are like me, you are worried about the impacts of increasing CO2 in the atmosphere. Our climate models are emphatic that rising levels of greenhouse gases will warm our planet substantially during this century. Here in the Pacific Northwest, our snowpack will decline and sea level will rise on the southern portion of our Pacific coastal zone.

And if you are like me, you found summer smoke two years in a row disturbing and worry that it will become an annual affair.

And perhaps you worry about the state of our waterways, the pollution of our Sound, or the decline of our signature Orcas. So do I.

You want to do something to address our environment challenges. You want action now, not later. I do too.

But if you care for the environment and if you want to see our nation take real steps to address global warming, you should vote no on I-1631, the Washington State carbon fee initiative.

As I will describe below, I-1631 is a flawed, ineffective, and highly partisan initiative that does little to deal with increasing greenhouse gases. An initiative that will line the pockets of special interest groups, do economic damage to our poorest citizens, and stand in the way of far more effective approaches. And its proponents have been less than honest about the nature of this ballot measure.

So why should you vote NO on this initiative?

#### 1. Reason One: There is No Concrete Spending Plan for Billions of Dollars

The state's Office of Financial Management estimates that I-1631 will bring in 2.3 billion dollars during the first five years, and that this will rise to tens of billions of dollars over the next three decades. But I-1631 has no explicit plan to deal with acute environmental challenges that require immediate investment if we are to be resilient to the future and current climate. Some examples:

1. Restore our east-side forests to a more natural state to prevent catastrophic fires. Talk to the experts at the UW School of Environmental and Forest Science, the USFA Forest Service, or the Washington Department of Natural Resources (I have). They know what needs to be done: thin our overgrown east-side forests, pull out the slash and junk that has accumulated over nearly a century of fire suppression, and allow light, prescribed fires to clean out the remaining debris. Restore the east-side forests to their natural state. To do so would cost hundreds of millions or billions of dollars, but it isn't being done because of a lack of funds and a lack of priority of our political leadership.

This initiative should have explicitly directed hundreds of millions of dollars into fixing our east-side forests and reducing the big fires and smoke. But it doesn't. And a forest-restoration effort could employ thousands of Washington State citizens and help stabilize our forest industry.

2. Rapidly Expand Rail Service in the Puget Sound Region. The Puget Sound region desperately needs a massive increase in rail service, which could get folks out of their cars and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The small portion of the light rail system that is complete is packed much of the time. But the current plans are for completion of the system in the early 2040s. That is ridiculous, and the reason for the delay is lack of money. Imagine if part of the carbon fee/tax was dedicated to light rail, with a commitment to speed up the system so that it is finished 10-15 years faster. The project would be cheaper to build and there would be a large reduction of fossil fuel emission. And a lot more construction jobs now. But 1631 does nothing on this.

3. Create the water storage system that will address the loss of mountain snowpack and greater evaporation from a warming climate. I do regional climate simulations as part of my research. Global warming will warm our region and substantially reduce our mountain snowpack. So there will be less snowmelt during summer and early fall to supply water for our farms and human consumption. But our annual rainfall will be fine, and even increase. The answer is clear: we need to build more reservoir capacity around the state to capture the winter water. And we need to improve our water delivery systems and encourage more efficient irrigation approaches (e.g., drip irrigation). There is great interest among the agricultural interests in eastern Washington for such an improved system of water storage, including a proposed 4 billion dollar Yakima Basin Integrated Water Plan. But the money is not there for it, and a carbon tax/fee could help supply it. No mention of this in 1631.

4. I-1631 provides no investments in scientific research for determining the impacts of climate change on our region. Research on the local implications of climate change and their impacts have been undermined by a lack of State support. One needs the best estimates of the future to make good decisions on what to do to adapt and be resilient to climate change. I-1631 ignores this critical requirement. And more funding is needed to maintain the climate observations stations in our state.

I could give you more examples of acutely needed climate resilience and carbon-emission reducing projects that desperately need funding. But you will not see any of them mentioned explicitly in I-1631.

Instead of explicitly dedicating carbon fee funding to important climate-related needs, I-1631 hands the responsibility of

distributing the cash to a 15-member oversight board including five WA state department heads and 10 appointed (by the Governor) individuals. Only one (the Commissioner of Public Lands) is elected. And to add to the bureaucracy, there are three additional advisory boards. These individuals are not accountable to anyone and they have no explicit plan to work with, other than seventy percent of the fee must be used for the "clean air and clean energy investments" and twenty five percent for the "clean water and healthy forests". The Sound Transit debacle shows the dangers of ineffective and wasteful spending by such public boards.

But it is worse than that. Much worse. The initiative hardwires money to certain special interest groups--the left-leaning supporters of the measure. A minimum of ten percent of the money goes to Indian tribes, who are exempted from paying any carbon fee by the initiative. Labor advocates got a fifty million dollar fund, replenished annually, for worker support programs. And to provide funding to the social action groups pushing the initiative, 35% of the money goes to "pollution and health action areas" of minority and "vulnerable populations." There is more, but you get the message (see picture below).

I-1631 will be a trough of billions of dollars of cash for left-leaning social action and "progressive" groups, and dealing with climate change will be a secondary priority. How can you know this for sure? Easy. The same groups that are pushing I-1631 opposed the revenue-neutral carbon tax initiative (I-732) in 2016, which was much more aggressive in reducing carbon initiatives. Why did they oppose it? Because their groups did not get the money.

I suspect that the vast majority of I-1631 supporters have not read the 38 pages of the initiative. If they did, they would be aghast of what they found.

2. Reason Two I-1631, is a highly partisan effort that will not serve as an example to the nation.

Washington State is a relatively green state, with much of our energy coming from hydropower. We represent a very small portion of the U.S.. The only way we can have a significant impact on global warming is by passing measures that have a real chance of being adopted across the U.S. I-732, the 2016 carbon tax initiative, was such a measure; one that was revenue neutral (returned all the carbon tax to Washington citizens) and had bipartisan support. Major national Republican leaders are now supporting a revenue neutral carbon tax, and a well-designed version in our state could be an example for the nation.

Unfortunately, I-1631 takes a completely partisan approach. A group of left-leaning social action and environmental groups, big labor, and native American tribes wrote I-1631, without any moderate or conservative support. I-1631 creates a carbon fee whose proceeds would be distributed by a committee appointed by our Democratic governor, with substantial portions of the money hardwired to left-leaning groups.

There is absolutely no chance that I-1631, with its "progressive" and "social action" agenda, can serve as a model to the nation, something made obvious by looking at a political map based on the last election (see below). Most of the counties in the U.S. are red (voted for Trump), not blue. The left-leaning, social action approach of I-1631 will never have much impact on the greenhouse gas emissions of most of the U.S.

3. I-1631's Carbon Fee is Too Small to Be Effective

The initial carbon fee of I-1631 is about half that I-732 would have initiated, and a number of analyses have shown that I-1631 would result in gas prices going up about 14 cents a gallon the first year. This is too small to have a significant impact on fuel usage by consumers, since gas prices go up and down far more than that due to market volatility. A revenue neutral carbon tax can increase the gas tax much more without consumer rebellion and damage to our economy. Why? Because consumers get all the funds back.

The bottom line of the above is that I-1631 will not only be ineffective in reducing carbon emissions over our state, but there is no explicit and coherent plan to direct the funds to acutely needed climate-related projects.

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But there is something else. The activists pushing I-1631 been extraordinarily deceptive in their claims and messaging. And if they are deceptive about the initiative, can you trust them later to spend billions of dollars wisely?

I-1631 False Claim 1: The Oil Companies Will Pay, So Energy Prices Won't Rise

The advocates of 1631 are making the claim that the oil companies will not pass on the carbon fee to consumer, so that prices of gasoline and heating fuels won't rise much, if at all. Don't believe me? It was on the front page of their web site (see below). A

total fiction. The oil companies will pass on this fee to you, guaranteed (I checked some of their representatives to confirm this).

And their claims are doubly ridiculous: the whole idea of a carbon fee is to substantially increase the price of gasoline or fuels, so that people move to more ecological alternatives. If the price stays the same or nearly the same, people will not change their ways and emissions will not decline.

#### I-1631 False Claim 2: I-1631 Makes the Big Polluters Pay!

Many of the advertisements and claims for 1631 state that the initiative will make "big polluters" pay. Unfortunately, that is not the case. I-1631 specifically excludes many of the big carbon polluters (e.g., the Centralia coal power plant, pulp mills, the aviation industry, Boeing) and the oil companies will simply pass the carbon fee on to consumers. So big polluters won't pay, individuals and small businesses will. Now that would not be so bad if the carbon tax/fee was returned directly to the individuals and businesses (like I-732 did), but it is a big problem in I-1631, which keeps all the money.

Importantly, I-1631 is a highly regressive fee, with the largest burden on the poorest people. We already have a very regressive tax structure; I-1631 makes it much worse.

#### I-1631 False Claim 3: I-1631 Will End the Summer Smoke Over Washington

A number of major 1631 supporters are claiming that 1631 will end or address the wildfire/smoke issue. With no plan, it is hard to see how they can make this claim. Hundreds of millions of dollars are needed to fix this problem, with a program directed by our best forest scientists. I-1631 has no such plan and does not commit the large resources needed.

#### Are Oil Companies Evil?

Perhaps the biggest animating force of the I-1631 activists is their hate of "big oil", who they see as the puppetmaster of conservatives and the enemy of dealing with global warming. They claim that big oil obfuscated the threat of global warming for years, preventing action. And the funding of a big portion of the No on 1631 campaign by big oil is seen as confirmation of its evil intent. Really, the I-1631 folks see oil companies as some kind of powerful amalgam of Darth Vader, the Devil, and perhaps Donald Trump.

I suspect the truth is more nuanced. If Big Oil was covering up global warming, they did a very bad job at it. The impact of CO2 has been talked about since the 80s and the estimates of the impacts have not really changed in thirty years. Global warming gets wide attention in the media, and if anything is hyped up and exaggerated. Greenhouse warming has been no secret.

And if oil companies were trying to suppress competitors, they have been ineffective. The technologies of solar and wind energy have matured and spread widely. Energy conserving technologies like LED bulbs have exploded. Hybrid and electric car technologies have flourished. Most oil companies now publicly acknowledge the threat of anthropogenic global warming, and they did very little to block I-732--the environmental left did the heavy lifting to stop 732.

#### Typical Oil Company Executive?

Big oil has provided a high-quality product at a declining price (considering inflation) that is demanded by virtually everyone. Yes, even environmental activists, who often are big travelers. If their products were not demanded, they would go out of business, like others before them.

To paraphrase Shakespeare: "the problem dear environmentalist is not in the oil companies, but in ourselves for demanding their product"

#### What should an environmentalist do?

If you care about global warming and the Washington State environment, one cannot support this poorly designed initiative that will do little to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, will not serve as example to the nation, and which has no real plan to spend huge sums of money. Its passage will stand in the way of more effective approaches.

We need to vote NO and move to a better approach, such as:

1. A bipartisan revenue-neutral carbon tax that will reduce our emissions and set the stage for a national carbon tax. A substantial

carbon tax will encourage individuals and industries to emit less and to move to renewable technologies. It will encourage research and development of better energy technologies.

2. Or a carbon fee that directs the money to explicit projects, like mass transit, fixing the forests, and ensuring sufficient water supplies in the future.

If you are uncertain about this initiative, please read through the text.

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10/15/18

**Axios**

*Want to tax carbon emissions? Just don't call it a tax*

Amy Harder

[Source](#)

Two parallel efforts to tax carbon emissions are taking great strides to avoid the t-word.

Why it matters: Because words matter! And this one — tax — matters more than most. It's at the intersection of our fossil-fuel dependence, the climate-change repercussions of that, and what (if anything) is done about it.

Proponents of an initiative on Washington state's ballot this November that puts a price on carbon emissions call it a fee, and back it up by citing state law, which defines the difference between taxes and fees. A similar ballot initiative two years ago was officially called a tax — and that's one of the reasons it failed, according to people involved at the time.

Backers of a separate push to get a carbon tax passed at the federal level have recently shifted their language to use the word "fee" instead of "tax." That lobbying effort just received a million-dollar backing by ExxonMobil.

The big picture: Taxes of any kind have always been unpopular with voters, and climate change is the most polarized issue in America, according to a recent Pew Research Center poll.

A carbon tax received the lowest level of support among respondents in a March Gallup poll compared to other ways to address climate change. Republicans were least likely to support it at 30%, whereas Democrats were more in favor at 71%.

The reason carbon taxes keep coming up is because, economically speaking, they make sense and are essential to addressing climate change. They're the simplest way to put a monetary value on the environmental impact of fossil fuels.

Just last week, two developments underscored that:

The Nobel Prize in economics was awarded to William Nordhaus, considered among the first to articulate a carbon tax and the benefits of it.

A seminal report just released by a United Nations scientific body said a price on greenhouse gas emissions is essential in addressing climate change.

Between the lines: Technical differences do often — but not always — differentiate fees from taxes. Money raised from fees goes to specific purposes, whereas taxes are often funneled into a general budget fund. A high-profile exception to this rule is the federal gasoline tax, which goes to the highway trust fund and yet is still called a tax.

This technical difference is what's driving the language in both the Washington state and Washington, D.C. carbon tax fee efforts.

In Washington state, the money raised goes to a handful of different efforts, a majority into clean-energy investments.

In the federal policy proposal, the money is sent back to Americans in the form of a dividend check.

"Fee goes over just a heck of a lot better," said one person involved in the federal carbon tax fee push who spoke candidly on the subject only on the condition of anonymity. "What we're finding from Republican offices is they like the concept. They don't like the word tax."

Economists worry the name game could backfire.



“Other terms may poll better, and if changing the name helps pass a bill, that’s fine with me,” said Adele Morris, an economist at the Brookings Institution with prior stints in the Treasury Department and Congress. “I do worry there’s a downside risk that proponents of another label will be accused of obfuscating the policy’s true tax-like nature.”

No matter what you call it, putting a price on carbon emissions will make fossil fuels more expensive. That’s a difficult proposition considering we depend on these fuels for so many things—from most of our electricity to plastics—in a way that we only notice when they’re gone or expensive.

“You have to accept the whole idea that putting a price on carbon is going to make carbon-containing products more expensive. Therefore, it will drive efficiency throughout the economy. That is also the reality we have to collectively accept as a society.”  
— Ben Van Beurden, CEO of Royal Dutch Shell, in recent interview

Judging by its actions, Shell, a company premised upon carbon-containing products, is still coming to terms with that reality. It’s opting to stay out of the Washington carbon tax fee fight, but it hasn’t (yet anyway) put money toward the federal carbon tax fee lobbying group.

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10/15/18

**Bloomberg**

*Washington to Decide on First-of-Its-Kind US Carbon Fee*

Eric Roston and Jim Efstathiou Jr

[Source](#)

Whatever you do, don’t call it a tax.

Voters in Washington state will go to the polls Nov. 6 to decide whether or not they want to impose a first-of-its-kind “fee” on carbon emissions. Ballot initiative 1631 marks the second time the state will vote to put a cost on emissions. A prior effort, labeled a carbon tax, failed when it was on the ballot two years ago.

Proponents including Democratic Governor Jay Inslee and Microsoft Corp. co-founder Bill Gates are hoping the new proposal -- which the state estimates would raise \$2.3 billion for clean-energy investment by 2025 -- will win more backing. If passed, it would be the first effort of its kind enacted by referendum anywhere in the world, making the state a global leader in climate policy at the same time the Trump administration is reversing some federal measures.

“If it passes, it would encourage carbon-tax supporters in other states -- as a matter of political reality, this means ‘blue’ states -- to pursue analogous referendums,” said Pavel Molchanov, an analyst at Raymond James & Associates in Houston, said in an email.

Because Washington is already one of the cleanest U.S. states in terms of greenhouse gases, a carbon fee would be less of a burden for households there than in other places, according to Neelesh Nerurkar, vice president with the Washington-based research firm ClearView Energy Partners LLC.

Fifty percent of registered voters support the measure, with 36 percent opposed, and 14 percent undecided, according to a poll conducted Oct. 4 to Oct. 9 by Elway Research and Crosscut, an online news provider. The margin of error is 5 percent.

The idea is to make carbon pollution more expensive so people will use less fossil fuel. Though with abundant hydroelectric power, Washington is already among the least carbon-intensive states in the nation, ranking ninth lowest in U.S. Energy Information Administration data. It produces more hydroelectric power than any other state -- more than double Oregon, which ranks second.

So the Washington measure isn’t likely to change the world, but “doing something is better than doing nothing,” said Robert Stavins, director of Harvard University’s environmental economics program.

Ballot initiative 1631 would impose a fee beginning in 2020 on major emitters of carbon dioxide, including refineries, power utilities and oil and gas producers. The amount would start at \$15 per ton of emitted CO2 and increase by \$2 a year, plus inflation, until the state meets its 2035 emissions goal to cut CO2 to 25 percent below 1990 levels.

The “NO on 1631” political-action committee estimates it would increase state gasoline prices as much as 14 cents a gallon. The group led by the Western States Petroleum Association -- which faults the measure for exempting other major polluters -- has

amassed more than \$21.3 million to fight the state proposal. Washington is the fifth-largest state in terms of refining capacity.

The measure “creates an un-level playing field within our industry, raising energy prices and failing to provide adequate transparency and accountability,” said Jamal Kheiry, a spokesman for Marathon Petroleum Corp., one of the top corporate donors along with Phillips 66 and BP Plc.

## UN Report

Backers of the measure -- who have raised \$8.49 million -- were emboldened by two events last week:

The United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change released a 700-page report chastising world leaders for their inaction on cutting greenhouse gas emissions and William Nordhaus of Yale University won half of the 2018 Nobel Prize in economics for research on how carbon-emissions pricing can drive change in the energy sector and in consumer behavior.

“The UN report is a seal of approval, that we’ve accurately assessed the dangers to our state,” Inslee said in an interview. “It’s a scientific coda to what we’re feeling personally. We’re choking on smoke from fires the last two summers. We’re seeing our shellfish industry damaged because of ocean acidification.”

The money the measure would raise is earmarked for environmental and community programs -- not the state treasury -- meaning it’s technically not a tax, Harvard’s Stavins said.

In the 2016 referendum, 59 percent of Washington voters rejected the carbon tax, which would have used revenue from the levy to cut other taxes and provide rebates to low earners. Environmental activists broke ranks over what to do with the proceeds, with some pushing for spending on renewable energy, public transit and communities inundated with pollution.

The 2018 version, developed in consultation with labor and social justice groups, American Indian tribes, communities of color, health organizations and business groups, is more politically viable because it invests in programs people want, said Mo McBroom, director of government relations for The Nature Conservancy, which has pumped \$1 million into the pro-carbon-fee campaign. A third of the money raised will go to addressing forest-fire risk and water-supply issues and the rest to carbon-reduction strategies.

## ‘Incentives and Activities’

“Our strategy is more focused on investing in the incentives and activities on the ground that will make us less reliant on fossil fuels,” she said. The 2016 measure “had no chance of passing” because the public “did not want to tax itself in order to pay for tax breaks.”

Average household fuel costs would rise by \$13 a month, according to the Washington State Budget & Policy Center, a Seattle-based group that develops and analyzes economic and policy proposals.

“What we have found is that people understand that their children’s health is worth a few dollars a month,” Inslee said. “You have excess pollution and inadequate health and this simply tries to reduce that externality by imposing a cost on something that is a cost to all of us.”

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