

PHYSICIANS FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Harrisburg-Hershey Chapter

Dear Members and Friends of PSR:

May, 2019

What's In a Name?

Shakespeare asked this question years ago, but it seems that this is very important today. Back in 2002, Frank Lutz, a Republican messaging expert, gave the Bush Administration tested scripts that they use to avoid climate action. One was that "climate change" sounds very non-threatening and they are still relying on his advice.

A recent study, using EEG and other measures to see how people of different political persuasions reacted to different terms regarding what is happening showed that "**Climate Crisis**" had a much larger response than "climate change" or "global warming". Indeed, we are having a climate crisis and it better describes our current situation. So, "what's in a name?". The answer is power to arouse and that is important. **So climate crisis it is.**

Words are important. Please listen to **Greta Thunberg** on TED and YouTube to hear her powerful message. Greta is a Swedish 16 year old climate activist who has spoken to UK parliament, and the UN among other places. This is in spite of having Asperger's Syndrome (a mild form of autism). She told the governments "This ongoing irresponsible behavior will no doubt be remembered in history as one of the greatest failures of humankind." She told the UN, "You are not mature enough to tell it like it is. Even that burden you leave to us children." "**Our house is on fire, I want you to panic**".

She is like a modern Joan of Arc but let's follow her instead of burning her at the stake!

The Uninhabitable Earth, life after warming by David Wallace-Wells states, "It is worse, much worse, than you think." He is backed up by several major reliable reports! But there are ways to change our direction. Please read it.

Unfortunately, all the greenhouse gasses are still rising. **CO2 recently broke 415 ppm** which has not been seen in the **last 3 million years** and the **sea level was 50ft higher**. The longer we delay action, the more suffering we'll face, even if we ultimately take action to save civilization.

We are very thankful for the **leadership and hard labor from Gwen and Dave Lehman** who organized and led a team to plant 1000 colorful annuals in the **Peace Garden**. They have supplied this leadership for many years with outstanding results. **The PSR team** received much help from **Rotary Club** of Harrisburg with President Andy Rebuck and about 8 members digging in the soil. They are partnering with PSR and the City to maintain this important project. **8 student from Hershey Med** helped along with several others. Walk by this beautiful two block area along the Susquehanna.

Please **have October 16** marked on your calendar **for our annual banquet which raises funds to help support the Peace Garden**. **Richard Alley Ph.D.** from Penn State and well known for his work in Climate circles, will present, "A look in the Future: Historic insights to Solutions on Climate and Energy". It is always a time of good food and fellowship and an important message .

Good news: Electricity is pulling ahead of fossil fuels as way to power busses. Electric busses now have 50% of worldwide new bus sales and are projected to be 80% in 20 years. Sadly , China is leading the development and production as we have **chosen not to compete**. Battery prices are plummeting and in three years electric vehicles should be cheaper

to make than gas and diesel. **Electric engines are much cleaner, more efficient and need much less maintenance . We have given China our future jobs by listening to the fossil fuel companies and short sighted politicians.**

USA Is not the only nation that has put short term profits over long term good. Australia, who has had their own climate crisis with the warming seas killing much of the Great Barrier Reef, extreme drought, and a heat wave so brutal that heat-stressed bats are falling out of trees. At the same time, Australia is the leading exporter of coal. In their recent election they surprisingly elected a person who once brought a lump of coal into Parliament urging them to dismiss the warnings from scientists, and to dig up more coal. Sounds all too familiar!

"We have lost Australia for now," warns Penn State climatologist **Michael Mann**. "A coalition of a small number of bad actors now threaten the survivability of our species." **"We must redouble our efforts to make sure that the rest of the world works even harder to act on climate. The stakes are too great to simply give up."** Michael Mann is also on the Board of PennFuture.

Where to start. In the words of writer James Baldwin: "Not everything that is faced can be changed. **But nothing can be changed until it is faced.**" So we face the reality of climate crisis along with the urgency, where do we direct our energies?

Like Greta Thunberg, **share the vision with others.**

Put a price on carbon pollution and return the proceeds to the people as proposed by the Citizens' Climate Lobby.

A Stanford study made clear that every major nation on earth could be supplying 80% of **its power from renewables** by 2030, at prices far cheaper than paying for the increasing climate damage.

Eat lower on the food chain and farm in ways that restore carbon to the soil.

We must mobilize like we did after Pearl Harbor as we faced a crisis of a different nature. The list goes on, **but we must realize that we can and must take action NOW!**

Sincerely,



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A price on pollution will benefit the climate, people, and the economy.

Today, we understand that climate change carries potentially catastrophic health, environmental, and economic costs. Nevertheless, in most places, there is no financial penalty for adding to the carbon pollution that drives climate change. As long as carbon pollution remains free, the true costs of fossil fuels will be hidden and may appear cheaper than low-carbon alternatives even as they put the long-term health and economic prosperity at risk.

CCL's preferred climate change solution is to put a price on carbon pollution and allocate the proceeds directly to Americans via a monthly dividend check, to spend as they see fit. Since 2009, CCL has been advocating for this policy under the name "Carbon Fee and Dividend". In 2018, the bipartisan Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act was introduced into both chambers of Congress. The bill (H.R. 763) has been reintroduced into the House of Representatives in 2019. CCL supports this bill, and is working towards its re-introduction in the Senate, and its passage through Congress.

This policy would place a predictable, steadily-rising price on carbon and other greenhouse gases. All fees collected, minus administrative costs, are allocated in equal shares to all Americans in the form of a monthly dividend check. In just 12 years such a system would reduce carbon emissions by at least 40%. Studies show it would also add 2.1 million jobs to the American economy.



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