

A Moral Responsibility To Act Now

The pace of greenhouse gas emissions and resulting environmental changes are accelerating. The associated health, environmental and, increasingly, national security costs continue to rise. Recognizing climate change to be humanity's largest challenge and the greatest threat to birds and other wildlife with which we share the earth, Audubon Washington and Admiralty Audubon have endorsed Initiative 732. The time for talk has ended. **We have a moral responsibility to act now.**

I-732 would establish a system similar to that implemented in British Columbia in 2008 and proven to work. In general, this initiative would add a tax to carbon-based fuels, encouraging conservation and renewable energy production, and return those tax revenues to residents and businesses with **no net change on state coffers.**

Specifically, it would:

- 1. Cut the state sales tax by 1%** - providing an annual sales tax savings for an average household of \$100 to \$200.
- 2. Fund the Working Families Tax Rebate** - providing up to \$1500/year for 460,000 low-income households, a major progressive change to WA taxes.
- 3. Effectively eliminate the Business and Occupation tax on manufacturing** - offsetting the increased energy costs for manufacturing businesses and ensuring that good jobs do not leave the state.
- 4. Add a \$25/ton tax on fossil fuels**, which will rise by 3.5% each subsequent year to a maximum of \$100/ton. By taxing

carbon-containing fuels, use and hence emissions are reduced. Economic modeling suggests that by 2050, a \$100/ton additional cost on fuel would reduce emissions by approx. 50%.



I-732 does not change state tax revenues but rather **it is a tax swap.** British Columbia has shown that the strategy of taxing what we don't want - carbon pollution - while lowering other taxes will reduce

emissions in Washington State and not impose significant costs on residents or businesses. As verified by an objective third-party fiscal analysis (see: <http://www.sightline.org/2016/08/02/does-initiative-732-carbon-tax-have-a-budget-hole/>) the tax changes listed above are predicted to be revenue neutral for state coffers.

I-732 is not the end but the beginning of efforts to reduce climate change. Science-based climate projections indicate that future impacts will demand additional legislation. But each year we wait, the impacts, costs and burdens on future generations increase.

The United States, China, India and 59 other nations have signed the Paris Agreement to curb greenhouse gas emissions. Washington voters have an opportunity to support our national effort by approving I-732 on our November ballot. Please join with Audubon and make this important first step - **VOTE YES.**

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