

South-Central Synod of Wisconsin 2017 Assembly Resolution #4

Carbon Fee and Dividend, A Climate Solution

- Whereas this church faithfully addresses the impact science, economics, and politics have on the well-being of God's creation and God's children; and
- Whereas this synod has adopted multiple resolutions including A Faithful Response to Global Climate Change in 2007, a Resolution on Energy Stewardship in 2011, and the Church's Response to Climate Disruption in 2015 reminding us that part of our calling as followers of Jesus is to address climate change; and
- Whereas since 1993 this church has understood the threats of climate change, as our social statement Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope, and Justice realized the urgency was already "widespread and serious, according to the preponderance of evidence from scientists worldwide [of] dangerous global warming, caused by the buildup of greenhouse gases, especially carbon dioxide" from the burning of fossil fuels, and that "action to counter degradation, especially within this decade, is essential to the future of our children and our children's children;" and
- Whereas the 2016 ELCA Churchwide Assembly adopted memorials from five synods on "A Responsible Energy Future" that give guidance to church investment decisions and "help transition to an economy less dependent on fossil fuels" and that also continue to call "all ELCA members, congregations, and synods...to advocate for policies that reduce energy use and our dependence on fossil fuels;" and
- Whereas it is recognized that as long as carbon pollution remains free the true costs of fossil fuels are hidden, allowing fossil fuels to appear cheaper than low-carbon alternatives even as they put long-term health and economic prosperity at risk; and
- Whereas a Carbon Fee and Dividend system would impose a predictable, steadily-rising carbon fee on on all fossil fuels and other greenhouse gases at the point where they first enter the economy, with all fees collected minus administrative costs being returned to households as a monthly energy dividend to ease the financial burden on families during the transition to a low-carbon; and
- Whereas phased-in carbon fees on greenhouse gas emissions will stimulate investment in alternative energy technologies, create jobs, give businesses powerful incentives to increase their energy efficiency and reduce their carbon footprints in order to remain competitive, and ultimately put us on a path of a sustainable climate by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and transitioning us to a clean energy economy; therefore let it be
- RESOLVED that this assembly encourage members and congregations to continue learning about and advocating for Carbon Fee and Dividend; and be it finally
- RESOLVED that this assembly invite our bishop to communicate to the members of Congress who represent the geographical territory of this synod our support for Carbon Fee and Dividend legislation.

References Nystrom, S., & Luckow, P. (2014). The Economic, Climate, Fiscal, Power, and Demographic Impact of a National Fee and Dividend Carbon Tax. Retrieved from: <http://www.ourenergypolicy.org/the-economic-climate-fiscal-power-and-demographic-impact-of-a-national-fee-and-dividend-carbon-tax/>

Baker, J., & Shultz, G. (2017). The Conservative Case for Carbon Dividends. Retrieved from: <https://www.clcouncil.org/>

Submitted by Care for God's Creation Team:
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Reference and Counsel Committee recommends adoption.

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