



The League of Women Voters
Berkeley • Albany • Emeryville

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Thursday, October 15, 2015

Mayor Maass and City Council
City of Albany
By email and hand
Re: Proposed Energy Utility Users Tax
Item 8-1 on the City Council Agenda for October 19, 2015

Dear Mayor Maass and Members of the City Council,

We urge you to consider an energy utility users tax as outlined and recommended by the Albany Sustainability Committee, and to include it on the November 2016 Albany municipal ballot. As proposed, the tax would assist the City of Albany to achieve its adopted greenhouse gas pollution reduction goal for 2020, and provide a plan for significant long-term greenhouse gas pollution reductions towards meeting the draft 2035 goal and net zero carbon dioxide emissions by 2050 target.

A 2% tax on the cost of electricity and natural gas would be essentially a “price on carbon”. The estimated \$200,000 from that tax could be used to subsidize building energy audits for Albany residents and provide matching funds for increasing building energy efficiency. Also, increased gas and electrical cost could help encourage energy conservation, a potentially direct reduction in greenhouse gas pollution.

The League of Women Voters recognizes the urgency of climate change, accepts the role greenhouse gas pollution plays in global warming, and “*supports legislation that seeks to protect our country from the physical, economic and public health effects of climate change.*” In 2008 the League of Women Voters of the US endorsed the National Call to Action on Global Warming, supporting national legislation that would, in part:

- *Take prudent action to reduce the risk of catastrophic global warming.*
- *Be effective and efficient.*
- *Accelerate the transition to a clean energy economy*
- *Plan for a warming world.*

And at its 2014 national convention, the LWW United State approved a resolution to support a price on carbon emissions as part of an overall program to improve energy efficiency and to replace fossil fuels with renewable energy fast enough to avoid serious damage to the climate system.

We believe the proposed energy utility users tax and accompanying expenditure plan would be an important local step in combating climate change.

Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nancy Bickel". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Nancy Bickel, President
president@lwvbae.org