

Letters to Congress

A hand-written letter, or a typed letter if it is personal, signed and sent through the mail, to a member of Congress is one of the best actions one can take to generate political will on an issue. The more letters, the better, as they demonstrate to representatives and senators that an issue is important to their constituency. The information below and the attached documents and links give information on climate issues you might discuss.

Basic letter outline – use this or the sample letter template:

- Make your letter personal by telling a little about yourself – occupation, whether you have children or grandchildren, which church you might attend, etc.
- Acknowledge your member of Congress for something they did or said recently or for their response to a previous letter, for example, his attempt to address a tough issue with immigration reform.
- Tell them why climate change is a big concern to you.
- Ask him to support a carbon fee that gives revenue back to households, preferably by equal, direct payments.
- Ask for a reply.
- Suggested length is 1-2 handwritten pages. The closer to one page the better.

Addresses and Phone Numbers:

Sen. Marco Rubio
Miami Office
8669 NW 36th Street
Suite 110
Doral, FL 33166
Phone: (305) 418-8553

See talking points on climate change and carbon fee and dividend on back page.

*Talking points on climate change and carbon fee and dividend
(IMPORTANT: Pick ONLY TWO; and use your own words):*

- Contrary to the conventional wisdom that we must choose between protecting the environment or the economy, a carbon fee with revenue returned to households will be good for the economy and produce millions of new jobs.
- A steadily-increasing fee on fossil fuels will send a price signal to the marketplace that causes a shift away from carbon-based energy and toward clean sources.
- Returning revenue to households, preferably through direct and equal payments, will make the transition economically painless and can actually stimulate the economy.
- Many conservative economists—Art Laffer, Greg Mankiw, Douglas Holtz-Eakin—argue that free enterprise can fix the climate problem, but only if we fix the distortion in the marketplace that give polluters free access to our skies.
- Conservatives such as former Secretary of State George Shultz support a fee on carbon that gives revenue back to households.
- I believe that your statement that surface temperatures in the earth have stabilized represents a misunderstanding of the temperature trends. The recent changes have been a slowing in the rate of increase in surface air temperatures, not an indication that the climate has stabilized.
- Every year is now what would have been a record year in the 1990s, and the last decade was the warmest in the modern record. Global temperatures are still rising, just not as fast as they were, and are expected to rise further.
- Failure to contain climate change will result in rising seas that flood coastal cities, food and water shortages, more severe and frequent natural disasters from extreme weather, disruption of the food chain in oceans because of increased ocean acidity.
- To avoid the worst effects of climate change, emissions of greenhouse gases from fossil fuels must be quickly and drastically reduced.
- If your member of Congress opposes EPA's new rule, suggest that a revenue-neutral carbon fee would provide a market-based alternative to EPA regulations.
- Major reports from the National Academies of Science, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the World Bank, and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change tell us that the Earth is warming at a dangerous rate because of the greenhouse gases being released from fossil fuels into the atmosphere.
- Before the Industrial Revolution, the concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere was 280 parts per million. It is now 400 ppm, a level not seen since before humans existed.
- Scientists tell us that to avoid catastrophic and unmanageable changes in our climate, the increase in global average temperature must be contained to 2° Celsius.
- A bipartisan coalition released a report this summer, Risky Business, citing the high economic toll that climate change will take on the U.S. economy in the coming years.
- The latest IPCC report states that we have a "carbon budget" – half of which has already been spent – of 1 trillion tons of CO₂ that can be emitted from fossil fuels. At current rates, we will exceed that budget in the coming decades.
- Nations and corporations have fossil fuel reserves that hold five times the amount of CO₂ that can be safely burned, meaning that 80 percent of those assets must be left in the ground.
- Most economists agree that the best way to reduce emissions is by placing a fee or tax on carbon.