



## Canadian Unitarians for Social Justice

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### Communiqué

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## UNITARIANS JOIN MOVEMENT FOR FAIR PRICE ON CARBON

*Canadian Unitarians for Social Justice (CUSJ) votes to promote Fee & Dividend*

OTTAWA – OTTAWA – Canadian Unitarians for Social Justice (CUSJ) members support a new system to reduce carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs). Differing from both ‘cap & trade’ and a carbon tax, the simple method is the only way, outside of regulation, that reduces GHGs without increasing income inequality or poverty.

“Climate change is the most urgent threat faced by humanity, by the planet’s ecosystems, and by the interdependent web upon which life on Earth depends,” said Margaret Rao, President of CUSJ. “Science tells us that fossil fuel use must be dramatically reduced if we are to avoid the most catastrophic impacts of a changing climate. One of the most effective ways to do this is to put a price on carbon...but so far the debate in Canada has only been between a so-called ‘job-killing’ carbon tax, and a cap and trade system plagued by problems in Europe that the U.S. refuses to adopt.”

CUSJ members voted unanimously to advocate for “*a predictable and steadily increasing fee placed on fossil fuels and their production*” at their entry into the economy, and that the pricing scheme disallow “*financial speculation or trading in such a way that provides profits for speculators without actually reducing emissions.*” The system shall also “*avoid increasing income inequality in Canada or disproportionately burden those surviving on low income.*”

The simplest and most effective system proposed to price carbon in this way, called Fee & Dividend, has been promoted by the grassroots nonprofit Citizens’ Climate Lobby.

“Citizens’ Climate Lobby welcomes Canada’s Unitarian Universalist environmental justice advocates to the growing coalition of groups that support Fee & Dividend,” said Cathy Orlando, National Manager of Citizens’ Climate Lobby Canada. “A predictable and increasing fee on carbon will spark the transition we need to a low carbon economy. The poor are inherently more ‘carbon-virtuous’ than the rich, because they buy fewer products with embedded carbon emissions. Since the Fee collected will be paid directly back to Canadians as Dividends, it will help to reduce poverty rather than making it worse.”

“Instead of reducing GHGs on the backs of low income families, such as a cap and trade system or ordinary carbon tax might do, Fee & Dividend is the only system that reduces emissions fairly...and which takes a bite out of poverty at the same time,” added Rao.

Canadian Unitarians for Social Justice (CUSJ) is a national faith-based organization founded to support Unitarian values through social action.

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