

North America and Nova Scotia have two serious issues economic issues that require a huge political will.

These problems are costs of carbon based energy and the effects of using carbon based energy on the environment:

1) As a society we have created an economy based on cheap energy. Cheap energy has been a driving force for innovation, life style and productivity. Individual and Group decisions that we take have an assumption of cheap energy. (Example: a) urban planning with single use zoning, b) building large shopping areas huge distances from where products are consumed, c) Importing food and goods over great distances.)

The result is that we, as a society, have created a dependency on cheap energy. Oil, Natural gas and coal are becoming harder to find and extract. The world demand for these energy intense resources is driving the price of these resources to higher and higher levels.

Our sources of cheap energy are becoming scarce and expensive. This is a real and present danger to our economy and our society.

2) As a society we are also faced with economic disruptions and additional economic costs based on changing climate. There is little doubt that the carbon that society expends consuming energy is a major contributor to world climate change.

These two problems are related and therefore require a solution that addresses both issues.

As a solution I propose the following:

- 1) Use the powers of government to raise the price of carbon based energy.
- 2) Use the neutrality of government to evaluate technologies and strategies that reduce energy use / carbon emissions
- 3) Educate the public on the technologies that are most effective.
- 4) Provide incentives to encourage structural change.

Let us consider the advantages of this strategy.

- 1) Raising the cost of energy reduces the demand for energy. (Reducing the use of carbon based energy also reduces climate change.)
- 2) Alternative energy technologies become competitive. (Using Alternative energy technologies reduces carbon emissions, reducing climate change.)
- 3) Business and individuals have economic incentive to make sustainable choices as they make investments in business and life style.
- 4) Make available to business and individuals incentives to encourage appropriate structural changes to their business and life styles that reduce dependency in carbon based energy and reduce green house gases. (Society must restructure. This will take time and effort. Businesses and individuals need time and hard economic reasons to do these investments. )
- 5) Allow governments to restructure revenue streams to reduce the impact of raising the cost of energy. (Revenue stream that aligns economic objective with regional, national and global objective. Other revenue streams can be reduced or dropped to reduce the impact of increased energy prices to the economy.)
- 6) Energy cost feedback is a constant in society. This is a large incentive for business and individuals to find the balance in business and life style that fits the resources / requirements that they have.
- 7) Allows government to focus on one major change. Other policy changes are important but can be implemented as adjustments to current structures.
- 8) Long term strategy that focuses on Nova Scotia strength. (Renewable energy in the form of wood, wind and tidal.)

- 9) Long term strategy reducing Nova Scotia weakness. (Dependence on foreign sources of oil and coal.)
- 10) Creates the necessary incentives for structural change that will position Nova Scotia for the long term when access to carbon based energy will be prohibitive or non existent.
- 11) Creates an environment to reduce carbon emissions through restructuring the economy away from Carbon based energy.
- 12) Uses the strengths of a democratic market based economy to find the winning combinations that will allow society to survive and thrive in a very complex set of problems.

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