

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

CARBON TAX A GOOD DEAL FOR BRITISH COLUMBIANS

June 30, 2008

The Editor
Prince George Citizen

I would like to take the opportunity to put into perspective Todd Whitcombe's column of June 30, "Numbers show carbon tax a raw deal".

By putting a price on carbon emissions, we create an economic incentive for British Columbians to make their own choices of how to reduce their dependence on fossil fuel. Professor Whitcombe assumes that people cannot change their behaviour. I believe he is far too pessimistic.

For example, at the current price of gasoline, someone who drives a vehicle with the fuel efficiency cited in his column of 7.1 litres/100 km 20,000 km a year could pay for the carbon tax by driving about six fewer kilometres a week. Combining any two errands into one, once a week, should do it.

Similarly, for those who heat their houses with a gas or oil furnace, lowering the temperature from 21 to 20 degrees during the day and from 18 to 16 degrees at night will more than cover the cost of the carbon tax. Throw an extra blanket on the bed and save fuel and money.

The reality we face is that climate change is having a major impact on our province and our world. We have an obligation to our children and their children to ensure they have the best possible lives. Our Climate Action Plan, including the carbon tax, is our gift to their future.

Colin Hansen
Minister of Finance