

CONCORD MONITOR

Carbon fee is the key

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Jerry Taylor is president of the Niskanen Institute, a conservative think tank. For 23 years he directed natural resource studies at the Cato Institute. He says that privately many Republicans support climate action; publicly they allow the Tea Party to dominate the conversation.

Recently, the Paul School of Business and Carsey Institute of Public Policy at UNH invited Taylor to present “The Conservative Case for Acting on Climate: Why Putting a Price on Carbon Matters.” Even among skeptical scientists, there is agreement that the climate is warming and that humans are driving that warming.

The questions are how much the planet is warming and how fast we will see the impacts. New Hampshire will see a 1.5-foot to 6-foot increase in sea level rise by the end of the century. Given the stakes and risk of environmental disasters, Taylor says, we must act now.

Thus far, the actions taken to address the burning of carbon have been regulatory, cap and trade, Clean Power Plan, etc. More regulation is unacceptable. The strategy needs to change to address the price of carbon itself – how aggressively carbon should be priced and where should the money go.

It is clear that a fee on carbon needs to be revenue neutral. The simplest and likely fairest distribution of the money is right back to taxpayers. It is urgent to bring climate change center stage in this year’s congressional and presidential elections.