



City of Cambridge
795 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA. 02139

October 27, 2016

Dear City Council and Staff,

Re: Climate Change Disclosure Labels for Gas Pumps

I am a lawyer and executive director of *Our Horizon*, a Canadian non-profit that works with governments to require climate change & air pollution labels on gas pumps. I understand that you discussed the matter at your previous council meeting and will be resuming your deliberations on October 31st. I am writing to share with you some of the thinking behind the concept.

There is a tremendous inertia to the incumbent energy system. A fossil fuel based economy is all we have ever known and the simple act of gassing up has been normalized for several generations. The labels take this habitual, automatic behaviour and de-normalize it. They close the 'experiential gap' between our use of fossil fuels and their impacts to create greater social impetus to address climate change. Challenging the status quo in this way stimulates broader demand for alternative solutions and accelerates our transition off fossil fuels. It is a simple, low-cost way to communicate hidden costs to end users and drive change upstream.

I have attached a brief article that I wrote in *Municipal World*, the most influential publication in Canada's municipal sector. It is a good summary of the concept. Should you decide to hold a committee hearing on the matter, I would be happy to travel from Toronto to offer a presentation and take your questions.

As you know, climate change is truly one of the greatest challenges of our time. I hope that we will tell our children and grandchildren that we had the courage to confront it.

Best wishes from your neighbour to the north,

Rob Shirkey
Executive Director, Our Horizon
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