

Comment Submitted by

Henry E. Auer

On the Governor's Council on Climate Change meeting held Nov. 27, 2017

My name is Henry E. Auer. I live in New Haven, CT. I listened to the entire GCCC meeting held earlier today using internet access to the meeting.

I believe an interim target for greenhouse gas emission reduction, the focus of the discussion in today's meeting, should be a single number for percent reduction from the reference value. The reason for this is that if a policy recommendation to the General Assembly is made for a target range, our legislators will likely accept the lower limit in the range as being more attainable and more politically acceptable. Therefore a single number rather than a range should be presented in the policy report to be written by the GCCC. I propose that this reduction be set minimally at 45% below the reference by 2030. A "stretch" value would be 50% by 2030.

These are ambitious but attainable goals. The political factors underlying success in attaining the goals rests, for example, on the demographics of the state, and of its legislators. A good gauge of this would be the popular vote in Connecticut in the 2016 presidential election. Hillary Clinton won 54.7% of the vote in Connecticut, while Donald Trump won 41.0%

(<http://www.cnn.com/election/results/states/connecticut#president>). (Admittedly the composition of the General Assembly is not so lopsided.) So if a policy were legislated such as suggested above, we may assume that its goals would be more broadly accepted by Clinton voters than by Trump voters. In other words, in Connecticut an ambitious goal of 45% or 50% reduction in emissions in the 12 years remaining until 2030 would be accepted, and implemented, in the early years of a program because a majority of residents would be more likely to agree with the GCCC climate policy objective. Their legislators would respond to their opinions on this policy. Action by this group would represent the "low hanging fruit" of attaining success in the beginning of the reduction pathway.

The more refractory members of Connecticut's population would need more time to accept the need for reducing GHG emissions. The 20 year period remaining after 2030 affords this group more time to adopt the measures needed to reach 80% reduction by 2050.

The above comments also support a schedule of emission reduction that is exponential rather than linear. Indeed this was presented in today's GCCC meeting, where slide 13 cited compound annual growth rate reductions, instead of linear rates. A CAGR places the largest reduction in the absolute amount of carbon dioxide emissions in the early years of a campaign, with lower annual absolute amounts in

later years. This is exactly the scenario envisioned above based on Connecticut's political demographics.

Respectfully submitted,

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