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# OPINION

## Report from Concord, February 2020

### Carbon Cash-Back plan appears on warrants

**Ken Wells**  
NH State Representative

Exciting things have been happening in New Hampshire in 2020, and Andover is right in the middle of it all.

New Hampshire held the First In The Nation Primary, and our state did itself proud in contributing a meaningful start to the important national process of selecting our presidential candidates for November. (Sorry you made a mess of it, Iowa.) Two important factors in the past election speak very well of all of you: voter turnout was very high, and New Hampshire voters are clearly better informed and engaged than in many other states.

Another first in the nation initiative is the call from New Hampshire citizens like you to pass warrant articles in every New Hampshire town, calling upon our elected officials to grow the political backbone to take strong action on our global climate emergency. Moreover, people like you are demanding that we stop allowing “free” pollution. If pollution is free, we get too much of it.

I’m proud to be a co-author of the “carbon cash-back” plan that will put money in the pocket of every New Hampshire citizen over 18, to make them whole for the damage we are all experiencing due to carbon dioxide pollution. This forceful plan is the most effective, and least expensive, plan for turning away from dirty imported fuels, and developing our own vibrant, home-grown, clean energy economy.

Our state is sending four billion of our dollars out of state annually for these fuels, and we would be better off if some of those dollars stayed in New Hampshire to build our own energy businesses. If this legislation is enacted here, there is a good chance that New Hampshire will be the first in the nation again in this regard. We will show other states and the entire nation how we make a course correction together, towards a brighter future. (I would have liked to have included “the world” in the previous sentence, but 46 countries are already doing this successfully.)

Your role in strongly voicing your demand for climate action is incredibly important, because many legislators

seem a little “hard of hearing” when it comes to listening to the voice of the people. On the local, state, and federal levels, make sure your voice is heard, loud and clear. I think that any elected official should expect to be voted out of office if they refuse to heed the will of their constituents, voiced loudly and clearly through the legal democratic process of warrant articles, passed by towns all across our state.

Aside from my extensive work on the House Science, Technology, and Energy Committee, there are a number of other important issues I have been fighting to advance in Concord. I have introduced two bills to get “dark money” out of our politics.

One bill will increase accountability for organizations that skirt New Hampshire’s requirements for lobbyists and political organizations to reveal who is paying them. The other establishes penalties for illegal anonymous “in kind” contributions during the 90 days before any New Hampshire election, including those annoying “attack ad” mailers that stuff our mailboxes and phone messages days before election day.

A third issue important to me is workforce development and training. I have partnered with a Republican legislator to write a truly bipartisan bill to study ways to make industry-funded apprenticeships work better in New Hampshire. The idea is that students who can’t afford schooling after high school can get their apprenticeship, training, and education paid for by industry, who will give them a good job if they successfully complete the program. In some ways, it’s the way ROTC works, combining education, work experience, and a paycheck.

I have also advanced a couple of bills for constituents, including streamlining the permitting process for new businesses and protecting loggers as well as landowners from unfair penalties and deceptive practices. David Karrick and I helped get the big communications industries to pay attention to folks’ demands for improved broadband access in parts of Danbury and Salisbury, and there’s finally an agreement in the works.

If you have ever thought “there ought to be a law...”, contact me at KenWells3@gmail.com or 735-5756 and we can talk about it!

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