

## **Carbon Pricing: Why Architects Care Talking Points**

Buildings contribute 40% of greenhouse gases. If we don't consider energy use in buildings, we will not effectively address climate change. How and where we build is either an investment in GHG reduction or a long-term liability. Through thoughtful design, architects are integral to a GHG long term reduction strategy for owners and for our State as a whole.

Proper price signals help our clients make good decisions. Carbon pricing will help building and construction costs tell the truth about climate impacts. Those price signals will make it more attractive for our clients to "do the right thing" and make design and construction decisions that are best for the environment. Without those price signals, architects can find it hard to persuade our clients to act in the climate's best interest. Monetizing carbon in this state recalibrates the economics of what building systems and architectural solutions are economically feasible for reducing GHG.

Without carbon pricing, our state is falling behind. Despite aggressive energy codes compared to the rest of the country, the energy efficiency of buildings in Washington is not on track for our state to meet the legal requirement of RCW 70.235.020. Neither the current cost of energy in this state nor the anticipated energy code improvements are likely to get us to our legal requirement by 2020 to reduce overall emissions of greenhouse gases in the state to 1990 levels. Washington is slipping behind Oregon, California and British Columbia, where similar schemes have succeeded in reducing carbon while not damaging the business climate in aggregate.

Carbon pricing should produce revenue to reinvest in building energy improvements. Architects are interested in seeing that a meaningful portion of any revenue or fees collected under a carbon monetization legislation go towards funding building energy efficiency. The funding should be technology agnostic and should be allocated proportional to each strategy's impact on the State's GHG emissions.

Architects work towards the common good. In the end, most architects care about creating spaces and places that improve quality of life and equity. Ignoring the impact of climate change and not advocating on legislative and economic mechanisms that make our projects part of the solution is counter to our professional ethos.