

Spurring State Action: Massachusetts & New Jersey

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Promises for energy decarbonization are easy to make. However, plans that politicians deliver tend to be half-baked and ineffectual. It will be essential for the public to be informed and involved to see that things actually get done.

Fortunately, the powers reserved to the states in the U.S. allow a range of approaches to be tested and compared. If we can hold state officials' feet to the fire, it will help us achieve national action to rapidly phase down fossil fuel use.

Massachusetts: The state Supreme Court has found in favor of youth who, supported by Our Children's Trust, filed suit against Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection for not producing a plan to phase down Massachusetts greenhouse gas emissions. The Court's decision requires the department to "promulgate regulations that ... limit the aggregate emissions released from each group of regulated sources or categories of sources, set emission limits for each year, and set limits that decline on an annual basis."

That is a useful step. But it is clear that as yet the state hasn't figured out how it can achieve the deep decarbonization that will be needed to stabilize climate. People need to look at data, and track how the data are changing over time, for fossil fuel emissions from each state.

Graphs of emissions by each fossil fuel source in a given state help people understand the situation and evaluate whether their officials are in fact taking effective actions. It is useful to compare progress in different states.

An event that is based on that tracking notion is planned for this weekend (May 21) in:

New Jersey (Duke Island Park in Bridgewater, from 9 AM to 2 PM): this is billed as the first ever [Zero Carbon Coaching Clinic](#), with the aim of helping people understand the options for phasing down carbon emissions and encouraging state to state competition, in a way that is "fun for the whole family". Contact Rezwan Razani <rezwan@fp2w.org> for information.

I appreciate being informed about such state actions, but during the next few months I am going to carefully budget my time, so that I reserve enough time to finally finish "Sophie's Planet", which I started a few years ago.