

NOT MAGIC, JUST SMART AND EFFECTIVE

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The editorial re: "Magical Liberal thinking Carbon tax will reduce social inequality and save the environment at no extra cost?" (Lorrie Goldstein, May 25) is a very cynical and narrow-minded way of looking at the concept of a carbon shift.

I'd like to address a few of its misguided conclusions.

First, there is nothing magical about our plan for the environment and the economy. It is quite simple: we reduce the tax on the things we like, and which we want more of – income, innovation, investment in green technologies; and, yes, increase tax on things we want less of – namely, pollution.

Most Canadians agree that we no can we simply treat our atmosphere as a free garbage dump. This shift in our tax system would better reflect our values and what we can and must do for the environment. But this shift would be revenue neutral – no more tax that we have now.

The concept is not new, and certainly not magical, but it is indeed a shift in the way we think about our environment and our economy.

Second, as stated in my original letter, this initiative would "help" lift many Canadians out of poverty. Mr. Goldstein's suggestion that I was implying that a carbon tax would single-handedly raise marginalised individuals out of poverty is simply wrong.

The Liberal Green Plan, through this shift in the focus of the tax system, will indeed help accomplish Stéphane Dion's 30-50 plan. His plan aims to reduce poverty in general by 30 per cent and reduce the number of children living in poverty by half.

This contrasts with the complete lack of a Conservative government plan for either improving the environment or poverty.

Third, to have concluded that the Liberal Party now believes that "taxes on income...are undesirable, even bad" is not only simplistic but entirely inaccurate.

It is a question of shifting the balance and the focus of the tax system. I will repeat, because apparently Mr. Goldstein missed the salient points: reduce (not eliminate) tax on things we like – income, innovation, investment – to encourage economic activity, productivity and global competitiveness.

To pay for these tax cuts (and, at the same, time to encourage a change to less polluting behaviour) we increase tax on pollution. It is not magic – just smart and effective.

Canadians deserve the facts, not misguided opinions. If anyone would like more information, they should feel free to check www.liberal.ca or to contact me at HallFindlay.M@parl.gc.ca .