

CONCORD and CARLISLE NATIONAL TEACH-IN ON CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION PRIORITIES

In February a “National Teach-In on Clean Energy and Climate Change” took place at Concord Carlisle High School. Local residents heard excellent presentations including current Presidential and Congressional climate change initiatives. These were followed by small group discussions; attendees were asked to brainstorm priorities for the Obama administration during the first 100 days. This was one of many Teach-Ins that took place across America. The Teach-Ins were designed to provide broad student and citizen feedback to the new administration on federal priorities for immediate climate action. The Concord-Carlisle Teach-In was co-sponsored by Carlisle Climate Action; ConcordCAN; the Concord-Carlisle League of Women Voters; the Green Sanctuary Committee of First Parish, Concord; and the Environmental Action Committee, First Religious Society of Carlisle.

Bulleted below are the major themes from Concord’s Teach-In concerning priorities for federal action:

- **International agreement on carbon reduction standards is critical for human survival. These standards should reflect the best advice of climate scientists as to what is needed to ward off environmental and economic catastrophe.**
- **The International Panel on Climate Change conference in Copenhagen in Dec., 2009 is extremely important; and the administration is urged to take a strong leadership role in that conference.**
- **Legislation is required that encourages, mandates, and funds energy conservation and energy efficiency measures at all levels. The administration is urged to set an example by making all federal buildings and vehicles energy efficient and issuing a call to action to all citizens and local governments to take responsibility for conserving energy.**
- **The federal government should strongly prioritize “clean” renewable or alternative energy, throwing government support and subsidies to these forms of energy. Many Teach-In participants felt that something resembling a “Manhattan Project” on alternative energy is essential, with strong support for new ideas and research; a new energy infrastructure, and large scale creation of “green jobs.”**

Teach-In participants were, also, challenged to brainstorm a list of actions their towns can take, and what they personally can do to address climate change. Increasing energy efficiency and energy conservation in local residences, Town buildings, and public and private vehicles was seen as a very high priority. Many agreed that Town government should take a very active role in promoting and modeling energy efficiency policies. Many were committed as well to personal involvement and action.

While Teach-In themes and action proposals were diverse, the overriding conclusion from the event is that many local residents see the need for immediate action on climate change and energy issues at all levels: federal, state, local, and personal. To learn more about what you can do, contact ConcordCAN at Concordclimate@Yahoo.com, or Carlisle Climate Action at Mghanauer@yahoo.com.