

CANADA'S ENERGY FUTURE IN AN AGE OF CLIMATE CHANGE

PRESS RELEASE: New Positive Energy report reveals unexpected consensus on climate policy in Alberta

[The University of Ottawa's Positive Energy program released today a new report](#) suggesting that there is more bipartisan and expert consensus on climate policy in Alberta than commonly believed. The report, written by Positive Energy faculty affiliate and Mount Royal University professor Duane Bratt, reveals that the talks that led to the development of Alberta's Climate Leadership Plan were started by Premier Jim Prentice in 2014. Following the election of Rachel Notley and the NDP in 2015, these talks grew into the most ambitious climate plan ever put forth by a government in Canada.

Dr. Bratt finds that while the Climate Leadership Plan was polarizing within Alberta, it opened a policy window across the country. Many of Canada's subsequent energy and climate policies would not have been possible without it. The Climate Leadership Plan was a success in terms of agenda setting and policy development, but a failure of implementation and communication. It was also undermined by many external factors, including delays to the Trans Mountain pipeline expansion, the elections of Donald Trump and BC premier John Horgan, and federal policies perceived to be anti-energy.

Since the election of Jason Kenney and the UCP in 2019, the Climate Leadership Plan's policies have proven surprisingly durable. The federal economy-wide carbon tax has replaced the provincial carbon tax, but every other major policy from Alberta's Climate Leadership Plan remains in effect. This includes the oilsands emissions cap, methane regulations for oil and gas, the coal phase-out, and an industrial carbon tax—which the Government of Alberta recently announced will rise to \$50/tonne by 2022.

The report is now available on Positive Energy's website. It is the first of four upcoming case studies that focus on initiatives to reduce polarization over energy and climate issues in Canada. Positive Energy is releasing additional case studies in the coming months.

Quotes

"The Climate Leadership Plan was a radical step forward for a province that had previously been viewed as a climate laggard. Alberta's experience shows that fundamental change in energy and environmental policy is possible. But it is hard work."

- Duane Bratt, Professor and Chair, Department of Economics, Justice, and Policy Studies, Mount Royal University, and Positive Energy Faculty Member

"As we chart Canada's energy future in an age of climate change, Alberta's Climate Leadership Plan is rich with lessons for policymakers and senior leaders. It is a model of stakeholder engagement, but a cautionary tale in policy implementation."

- Monica Gattinger, Chair, Positive Energy, Director, Institute for Science, Society and Policy, and Full Professor, School of Political Studies, University of Ottawa

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