

Endorsement Note from Craig Altemose of Mass Powershift

Craig raising awareness at Massachusetts Statehouse Rally

Dear friends at Big Medicine, and all the organizations bringing together the Green Festival for Educators,

Greetings!

I write to you with the sincerest hope of a friend from across the globe. While climate change is a tremendous threat to all of the peoples of the world, the scale of the problem also means that our fates are bound together. We are engaged in the same struggle. A victory for you is a victory for me. And a victory for me is a victory for you. But for all of us to truly not just survive, but thrive, we all need to win, and we must do so quickly.

So it is that I am writing to tell you about some of our victories in the American state of Massachusetts, in the hope that you will soon have some good news of your own to share.

My state of Massachusetts has a large number of colleges and universities in it. For a while, the students in my state worked on trying to make our schools and colleges more green. We succeeded in getting many of our college and university presidents to pledge to make their schools carbon neutral. At my university, Harvard, we did not get a commitment of carbon neutrality, but the president did commit to reducing our emissions 30% over the next 8 years.

So while we had great success in our efforts on-campus, we knew that we could not stop there. The threat of climate change was so large that we needed to do more. Last year, we worked with community members and environmental groups from across the state to pass the Massachusetts Global Warming Solutions Act, which required our state to reduce its emissions 80% below 1990 levels by the year 2050, and 10-25% below 1990 levels by the year 2020.

So with some success at the state level, we have turned our eyes to Congress, our national legislature. This year, we worked with allies in the state legislature to pass a resolution, calling upon congress to implement Al Gore's plan to RePower America with 100% Clean Electricity in 10 Years. We did this with almost no money, and no resources other than our time, energy, and passion. After passing the resolution through our state government, three members of congress from Massachusetts have pledged their public support for the resolution and its goals.

We are going to be working very hard this fall to try to set our state's policy as closely aligned with the necessary goal of returning our atmospheric levels of carbon dioxide to 350 parts per million.

We in the developed world, and in the United States particularly, are primarily responsible for the tragedy that faces us. We have more of a responsibility to act, and my peers and I are trying very hard to make sure that our country lives up to its past sins and its current responsibilities. Yet at the same time, we know now that the threat of climate change is such that reducing emissions in developed countries is not enough. Each and every country must participate meaningfully, and India, as the world's largest democracy, has a very important role to play.

I congratulate you all on the work you have done, and express my sincere gratitude for the great things you will yet accomplish. Know that there are many friends around the world, cheering on your every step. We stand with you, and wish you the speed of the gods.

In solidarity and hope for a better tomorrow, Craig S. Altemose
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