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Residents push articles to fight global warming

By Daymond Steer

MILFORD — Some New Hampshire residents are trying to save the world from potentially devastating consequences of global warming. Through the Carbon Coalition, they will ask voters in about 80 towns to pass a global climate change resolution at their town meetings in March.

Among them are residents of Milford, Amherst, Wilton, Bedford, and Hollis.

Warrant articles throughout the state will ask residents to urge federal and local authorities to take action against human activities that increase levels of carbon dioxide.

The Milford Conservation Commission was scheduled to consider endorsing a petition warrant article at it's meeting tonight, Thursday, Dec. 14 in town hall. The meeting was scheduled to start at 7:15.

The Carbon Coalition is made up of scientists, students, and other citizens who are advocating for a national energy policy that addresses climate change. They say the main cause of global warming is burning fossil fuels, which releases carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. Other activities, such as raising livestock, also contribute.

"Carbon dioxide is the big story," said Cameron Wake, research professor at the University of New Hampshire's Climate Change Research Center in Durham.

On the local level, the resolution asks town officials to consider appointing a special committee to investigate ways to save energy and reduce emissions of greenhouse gases.

The goal is to have as many municipalities as possible adopt resolutions to present to candidates for Congress and the presidency in the 2008 elections.

David Momenee, of Milford, said people are being very receptive to his petition warrant article. Though he needed 25 signatures, he ended up gathering 48.

"Apparently lay people have to step up because the people we have been counting on have not been doing their jobs," he said. "I'm not a scientist, but I'm trying to help out.

Similar frustrations motivated Amherst resident Rick Katzenberg, who said the Bush administration doesn't care about climate change.

"This is an issue we can deal with at the local level and cumulatively we can make a tremendous difference," he said.

As of Tuesday morning Katzenberg had gathered 17 of the 25 signatures he needs to put the resolution on the March ballot.

In Hollis, petitioner Jerry Amos said he hopes a resolution would generate support for alternative energy sources that don't pollute, such as windmills. Amos gathered 44 signatures and needed 25.

In Wilton Gail Proctor is heading the effort to get the resolution on the warrant. She said it's unclear if it will be a petition warrant article or if it will be endorsed by selectmen. The conservation commission is supporting the Carbon Coalition's efforts.

"For the past few years, a number of scientists have been saying that global warming may be happening. This year, we are all aware that global warming is happening," wrote Wilton Conservation Commission member Spencer Brookes in an e-mail to The Cabinet.

For more information visit www.carboncoalition.org.

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