

A/AB track additional writing

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December 2023

After reviewing the entirety of Local Law 97, NYC has disregarded equity considerations within this law, which may disproportionately impact those who struggle financially. The policy needs to be more transparent regarding their considerations of equity. Though the policy states that the government hopes to make NYC more equitable, they need clear sections in the law that mention equity. Creating a society that values equity can help all people reach their full potential by helping those who need more help.

In response to the growing need for sustainable city practices, New York City is pushing for significant environmental policy shifts, including implementing a carbon tax specifically targeting large buildings, with a hope for more energy efficiency while curbing carbon emissions within New York City. This proposed carbon tax on large buildings in New York City will require buildings bigger than 25,000 square feet to reduce their emissions starting in January 2024. Buildings that do not do this will face fines up to \$268 per ton of carbon over their limit, which will likely add up to millions of dollars in fines per year from the buildings with the highest emissions. This policy shift is important when addressing the environmental impact of NYC's buildings since they contribute to over 70% of New York City's emissions. New York City hopes to change energy efficiency and reduce its carbon footprint by enforcing these carbon reduction measures.

Carbon pricing is implementing a policy that shifts the costs of carbon emissions from the people of New York City to the direct carbon polluter, which in this case is the buildings. This will incentivize these building owners to reduce emissions. Carbon taxes like this one increase the cost of fossil fuels that emit carbon, pushing businesses to switch to cleaner energy. The people and businesses with lower costs for reducing pollution are being encouraged to make more cuts in emissions. This idea will ensure that reducing pollution will match the cost of causing it as closely as possible. Introducing a carbon tax in New York City will move towards the goal of carbon pricing to increase emission reductions and sustainability within the city area.

If you look at New York City's overall emissions, you can see that energy consumption in buildings is the main contributor; the largest buildings contribute 35% of emissions, and other buildings contribute 32% to the city's emissions profile. In contrast, transportation contributes to just 28%, and waste contributes only 4%. This data proves the critical role of addressing energy usage in the city, mainly on the need to focus on their buildings as a target for these efforts in emissions reduction. By directing their attention to the most significant contributors, New York City can increase its hope for a more environmentally conscious city.

Local Law 97 incorporates recommendations from Urban Green's 80×50 Buildings Partnership, giving the law input from professionals who focus on making "smart climate change policies." This law will also create emissions limits specific to each building, changing requirements by looking at factors such as size, property type, and year. New York City hopes to grow energy efficiency with Building Energy Efficiency Ratings based on ENERGY STAR scores. This will inform New Yorkers about the differences in building energy use, hopefully

creating a culture of awareness and accountability among the people of New York City. But there are still many concerns about this policy, one of which is how this may disproportionately affect people.

The rent in NYC may increase due to the changes and repairs these buildings must make. This can be scary for many struggling to pay their rent and support themselves and their families. The main impact will likely be the cost of rent, forcing stores to raise prices to keep up. Lower-income households spend a more significant proportion of their income on energy costs. Paying more for energy or getting all-new energy-efficient appliances may only be possible for the more affluent.

Almost half of renters are paying 35% or more of their income on their rent. It is suggested that 50% of your income goes to needs, including rent, food, medication, transportation, electricity, etc. With 35% of people's income going to their rent, they have only 15% to spend on other needs. The average monthly income in NYC is approx. \$4500 (which is not even considered a livable salary in NYC) gives people only a couple hundred left per month for their needs, also considering the other necessary expenses, like regular payments needed, debt, loans, insurance, and overall savings, the average person is likely not making enough to afford most of their needs/payments. Therefore, a rent increase can create many hardships for struggling people.

Carbon pricing initiatives may influence construction, leading to increased prices in homes. This can lead to gentrification, pushing out low-income residents and harming

communities. Policies need to address affordable housing to prevent this. If carbon pricing measures are strict, industries may relocate to countries with fewer regulations. This can lead to a loss of local jobs, impacting workers negatively.

Carbon pricing can lead to higher energy prices, affecting households that spend much of their income on energy. Without proper measures, the burden of a rise in energy costs can harm low-income households, contributing to further issues of wealth inequality. Due to carbon pricing policies, industries with high emissions may face economic challenges and need to downsize. Job losses could impact workers, leading to unemployment and economic instability in communities. Switching to energy-efficient technologies will likely be more expensive. Low-income communities may face high costs to access cleaner technologies but not benefit from long-term impacts.

There will be positive impacts if, when we create plans, we make sure specific values stay in place, make sure there are positive impacts throughout the future as laws like these become more common, and spread awareness on the importance of implementing laws that make sure impacts on low-income communities are taken into consideration. To continue to have these values within these policies, people need to be aware of their impacts on low-income communities and how they may change over time and make adjustments. I recommend adjustments and additions to the current policy. Considering the benefits gained financially over time from the cost of these implementations from the fines and long-term benefits of money saved when using more efficient energy, there will be leftover money to spend on helping support low-income communities. Some say low-income communities can be supported by

reducing the impact of carbon pricing policies like Local Law 97 on vulnerable populations, which is very important to ensure it is equitable.

After looking at the distributional impacts, they can create solar initiatives that allow residents in low-income communities to access clean energy at a reduced cost. Create energy-efficient upgrades in affordable housing to minimize the impact of energy costs on low-income residents. Implement subsidies or rebates to offset the increased costs for low-income households. Start training programs for green jobs in the renewable energy sector. Create community engagement programs to educate these low-income communities about the benefits of carbon pricing policies and energy conservation. Offer incentives and support programs for small businesses in vulnerable areas so they can get energy-efficient appliances. Provide financial support for energy-efficient changes in buildings in low-income neighborhoods. Dedicate a portion of the revenue from the carbon pricing to fund healthcare and social services in vulnerable communities. Start a carbon offset program that benefits vulnerable communities through tree planting and gardens, using carbon pricing funds to improve public transportation infrastructure. The city can work towards a more equitable version of carbon pricing policies by implementing measures like these.

Public awareness and engagement are imperative to ensure equitable carbon pricing policies. Making sure people are aware of these issues and want this to be considered in policymaking can significantly impact the implementation of these policies and, therefore, will be more favorable to people and will have more positive long-term impacts as well. Something else that is very important to ensure these policies positively impact low-income communities is

to make sure there is a collaboration between the government and local communities for successful implementation. Listening to the individual needs of particular communities and what is favorable is essential for the well-being of people all over. This is how we make sure that there are not only environmentally sustainable policies but also socially sustainable policies.

The government should create energy rebates to help low-income households offset the costs of energy that increase. They also can increase public transport subsidies to lessen the burden on those who rely on public transport. Another thing they can do is create initiatives to support workers in industries affected by this. Additionally, the government should create affordable housing initiatives to help with the rising costs and ensure affordability for particular housing.

Overall, a carbon tax is significant and will positively impact the environment, but the issues that may arise due to this may disproportionately impact lower-income individuals. However, there are many ways to avoid this and take measures to ensure it does not happen. With the right amount of effort and thoughtful regulations for this law, a carbon tax can positively impact everyone.