

Senate Bill 2232: An Act enabling taxpayer donations to the Least Developed Countries Fund established by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

Sponsor: Senator Mike Barrett

S.2232 creates a voluntary checkoff on state tax returns to help the world's most vulnerable countries cope with global climate change. This bill benefits of this bill include:

1. **Helps the World's Most Vulnerable.** The funds collected via this bill will go to a special UN fund 100% dedicated to helping the people and communities who are the most susceptible to the effects of climate change and who have the fewest resources to adapt and protect themselves. This fund has strong oversight so there is assurance that the monies collected flow directly to those most in need of assistance.
2. **Supports the Paris Climate Agreement.** This bill takes a stand against President Trump's anti-climate agenda, and it shows that Massachusetts is committed to the Paris Climate Agreement and is a global leader on confronting the threat of climate change. Largely unprecedented, the integration of state and international affairs will serve as a powerful indication of public support and will be the benchmark for action by other subnational entities, domestically and abroad.
3. **Encourages Massachusetts Residents to Make a Global Impact.** Climate change is a global challenge that requires collective action. This innovative approach is voluntary and provides Massachusetts residents an easily accessible opportunity to take global action and make a meaningful difference in the lives of those most affected by climate change.
4. **Has No State Costs.** There are no programmatic or net administrative costs to the state or mandates upon citizens – the program is entirely voluntary

Projects Funded Through the Least Developed Countries Fund

The Least-Developed Countries Fund (LDCF) has been used for projects to mitigate the devastation of climate change and enhance a country's resiliency. Projects reduce the vulnerability of resources that are central to development and livelihoods, such as water, agriculture and food security, health, disaster risk management and prevention, infrastructure, and fragile ecosystems.

For example, Haiti is experiencing longer dry seasons and shorter rainy seasons, but both are more intense. Beach erosion is increasing, fresh water aquifers and estuaries are becoming salt water, and hurricanes are increasing in frequency.

A project funded by the LDCF is allowing Haiti to shift from reactive crisis management to proactive risk management. Funding is being used to train policy makers and other key staff, and informs future policy for better coastal zone planning. They are also revising construction and development standards so that coastal infrastructure and equipment is more resilient to these climate changes.

Helps the World's Most Vulnerable

Climate change is a humanitarian crisis. Rising global temperatures are fueling more frequent and extreme weather events. From Bangladesh to Barbuda, it is the poorest who bear the brunt of the devastating. The time to act is now.

Funds collected under this bill will go to the U.N. Least-Developed Countries Fund, devoted entirely to helping the more than **880 million people in the poorest 48 countries on earth**. Displacement, death, loss of livelihood, disease, and the interruption of economic development are all consequences of a warmer, more intense, and less predictable climate. **Residents in LDCs are five times more likely to die** from climate-related disasters than other citizens of the globe.^a The World Bank reports that climate change could result in more than 100 million additional people living in poverty by 2030.^b

The world's LDCs are the least equipped nations to adapt to these changes, and yet they are subject to the worst of them. Outside support will be crucial in determining whether these dystopian scenarios come to pass or are avoided. This fund has strong oversight and safeguards so that the monies collected will be used as intended.

Supports the Paris Agreement on Climate Change

In June 2017, President Trump announced his intent to withdraw the U.S. from the Paris Climate Agreement, turning his back on our allies and the global poor. In addition, President Trump moved to slash funding for international climate finance. In reaction, states must step up and send a message of hope to the international community. Massachusetts has an opportunity to set an example that will be acknowledged all over the world as showing commitment and leadership to an equitable and effective climate solution.

Encourages Massachusetts Residents to Make a Global Impact

Citizens across the Commonwealth are asking that the state take action to combat climate change. The majority of residents believe that the state is not doing enough to fight climate change.

- Three-quarters of state residents believe global warming is a “very serious” or “somewhat serious” problem for Massachusetts.^c
- Residents set a high standard for themselves. **45% say that people in Massachusetts need to do “a lot” to respond to global warming.** However, they give their neighbors a low grade: Only 4% believe residents are now meeting that standard.
- **59% of residents agree** with the statement “Massachusetts will excel in the competition for green economy jobs by taking the lead in fighting global warming.”

The voluntary contribution enabled by this bill is a way for those who want to act to do so. Voluntary, state-enabled individual participation will propel and solidify Massachusetts as a leader in the fight against global climate change.

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^a "A Burden to Share? Addressing Unequal Climate Impacts in the Least Developed Countries." *Science* 201.4357 (2013): 694-95.
<http://pubs.iied.org/pdfs/17181IIED.pdf>

^b Hallegatte, Stephane, Mook Bangalore, Marianne Fay, Tamaro Kane, Ulf Narloch, Julie Rozenberg, David Treguer, and Adrien Vogt-Schilb. 2016. *Shock Waves: Managing the Impacts of Climate Change on Poverty*. Climate Change and Development Series. Washington, DC: World Bank. doi: 10.1596/978-1-4648-0673-5. License: Creative Commons Attribution CC BY 3.0 IGO.

<https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/22787/9781464806735.pdf>

^c <https://massinc.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/04/ClimateReportExecSummary.pdf>