

LOUDOUN EDITORIAL

Loudoun Times-Mirror

Your Views

Global warming: Time for Loudoun's leaders to act

I wholeheartedly support Bruce Smart's call to action in his commentary "Global warming: What should we do?" [Loudoun Times-Mirror, July 26]. As Mr. Smart stated, global warming has the potential to bring about "civilization-threatening changes."

Because our federal government has failed to seriously address this issue, local governments around the country are taking action. More than 250 U.S. mayors have already signed on to the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement, a program initiated by Seattle Mayor Greg Nickels in February 2005. Under this program, mayors have pledged to reduce carbon dioxide emissions in their cities to 7 percent below 1990 levels by 2012 (the same levels called for under the Kyoto Protocol Global Warming Treaty). In addition, several counties around the country have signed on to similar agreements.

Now is the time for our local business and government leaders, particularly the Leesburg mayor and Town Council and the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors, to step up to the challenge as well. Neighboring communities are already taking action. For example, the city of Alexandria is one of the signatories of the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement and Fairfax County has an energy conservation program that includes a wide variety of initiatives for reducing energy consumption.

Common-sense energy solutions are being implemented around the country. For example, the city of Charlotte, N.C., is converting its municipal fleet to hybrid cars due to lower operating expenses. Salt Lake City is saving more than \$32,000 a year on its energy costs as a result of switching to light emitting diode (LED) traffic signals. In Twins Falls, Idaho, local officials are making the city's 11 schools more energy efficient, with expectations to save \$3.5 million annually on their energy bill. And the local utility in Waverly, Iowa, is paying farmers to install wind turbines on their land. The list goes on and on.

Lastly, I call on the citizens of Loudoun to become engaged in this issue. We owe it to our children and grandchildren.

Eric White
Sterling

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