



Let green power energize Mass.

By **TEDD SAUNDERS**
and **JOHN ROSENTHAL**

Today we stand at a crossroads in the debate over our energy future, and the choices we make will define the arc of American prosperity for decades to come.

Despite major support from business, religious and national security leaders, Senate Republicans and coal-state Democrats succeeded in postponing long-awaited action on a clean energy climate bill.

That's shameful because every day our senators delay passing sound national energy policy, China and other nations zoom ahead of us in the trillion-dollar clean energy market, creating countless jobs that should be American jobs.

And every day our senators delay, we send a billion dollars to unstable, unfriendly governments for oil, weakening our national security. As The New York Times' Tom Friedman would say, they're high-fiving Senate inaction right now in Beijing, Saudia Arabia and Iran.

The Senate must pass comprehensive energy and climate legislation when it returns from its August recess. There are huge economic gains to be made for Massachusetts and the nation by moving toward a clean energy economy. Our businesses prove that the bottom line of green is black.

At The Lenox Hotel, The Saunders Hotel Group instituted comprehensive energy efficiency and other measures to improve the 110-year-old hotel's environmental footprint. State-of-the-art cooling towers, boilers and energy management systems reduce energy consumption 35

percent annually.

Environmental programs save money and while other hotels were forced to downsize during the recent economic turmoil, The Lenox did not.

Meredith Management's eco-programs also prove the point. The real estate company installed solar power on four apartment/office properties, generating 300,000 kilowatts of electricity annually. Within five years the investment will be returned, with pure savings after that.

Meredith plans to install solar panels on the MBTA's new Yawkey Commuter Rail Station, making it the first "Zero-Net Energy" train station in Massachusetts, and to build the state's largest solar power plant at

its Fenway Center development.

Unfortunately, however, these projects are the exception. Just think of the dollar and energy savings, cleaner air and energy independence we could achieve if the playing field

were leveled between clean energy sources and dirty fossil fuels, and all of Boston's buildings could employ non-polluting renewable power.

Federal policy that puts a price on carbon emissions could help us get there. It would tell investors that the free ride for fossil fuels which are destroying the Gulf of Mexico, disrupting the climate and lining the pockets of petro-dictators is over. It would create jobs, grow our state's clean energy industry and protect consumers from volatile energy spikes. It would signal that investment in cleaner, renewable, energy sources is better for us all.

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