

## **Letter: Our financial incentives**

**Posted: Saturday, March 19, 2016 12:00 am**

Thank you for running Joe Ryan's column regarding I-732, the Washington state initiative for a revenue-neutral carbon tax (His View: Carbon tax initiative would help poor rural communities, Feb. 22). As Ryan rightly points out, Washington and the rest of the world are already seeing the early effects of climate change on our wild spaces and farmlands. We need to act now to help slow that change.

I-732 provides an incentive for businesses and individuals to reduce their reliance on fossil fuels by putting a price on the climate-altering carbon dioxide those fuels emit. This extra cost is offset by reducing the state sales tax, nearly eliminating a business tax, and funding an existing tax credit for low-income working Washingtonians, many of whom live in our region. These tax reductions encourage people to spend more in their local communities and help efficient businesses reduce their tax burden. This tax swap isn't just liberal pie in the sky. Economists all across the political spectrum recognize the power of revenue-neutral carbon taxes to clean up our air and make our economy more efficient without breaking the bank or expanding the reach of government.

This legislation isn't about punishing people for living their lives (as a certain Daily News columnist has suggested). Instead, it is about aligning our financial incentives with our desire to be good stewards of the land we all depend on.

**Greg Brabeck**

Pullman