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The fundamental right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness is enshrined in this country's founding documents. My family's concern is with the changing climate, which is shifting today faster than at the end of the last Ice Age. We became aware of the dangers of further changes in 1988 when James Hanson addressed the US Senate, describing carbon dioxide's property as a "greenhouse gas," and the dangers of increasing carbon dioxide emissions from burning fossil fuels.

The problem is that we as a society, have become addicted to those fuels. They provide far more than human energy, and their price is artificially low because we allow air pollution for free, despite the risk to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness for our grandchildren.

Maine's Climate Council, recognizing this climate crisis, took a lead in advocating for changes throughout the economy. However, Maine is a small state, with only one 300th of the nation's emissions. Thus the Council recommended that the pricing of pollution be considered at a national level. My family trusts that the passage of The Pine Tree Amendment can send that message to national and international decision-makers.