

# We Need Resources and Leadership!

William Morales



I remember when I was young, I asked my father about global warming and the effects it would have on our planet. He basically told me not to worry because any major changes to the environment will occur long after his and my time on this planet. So, while I was growing up, I never cared about littering or unplugging appliances when they were not in use. I have to wonder how many other parents told their children what my father told me.

Now that we can't put off dealing with this problem, there are a number of paths we could take to help stop global warming. But many of the solutions require some resources to get started.

Take me. I am a state prisoner in the process of getting my General Equivalent Diploma. I am going home to nothing. My first job will probably be in a fast food restaurant. I just don't think it will be possible for me to “go green” right away. I won't

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be financially stable enough to afford a *biodiesel* engine or *hybrid vehicle*. I will have to purchase the cheapest means of transportation. I have spoken to many other men throughout the

state prison system. Most of them, if they had the chance, would gladly go green. But money will definitely be an issue.

It would help if the government would provide some leadership. There should be financial incentives, like tax credits, for people to make their

homes more energy efficient. The government should put more resources into the search for alternative fuels that are less costly and more earth friendly. There could be community centers that distribute the tools people need to conserve energy – like compact fluorescent lightbulbs, bicycles, and weather stripping.

Government leaders always worry that environmental protections will hurt the economy, but it doesn't take a genius to figure out that without the planet, there will be no economy.

I want the government to offer free public awareness classes for children and adults (including incarcerated people), so that we can all learn about global warming. Public television should have shows that educate people about how we can save our planet. If they can keep the “war on terrorism” in the public view, why can't they do the same with climate change?

The government should put global warming at the top of its list of problems that need attention. But, so far, it has not done that. How can individuals try to “go green” when the government does the exact opposite? That is not leadership.

We can all play our part in the fight against global warming. We can't leave it up to the next generation or the generation after that to fix the problem. This is Mother Earth we are talking about. She gives her all to every one of us. What we fail to realize is without her there is no “us.”

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*William Morales was born in 1978 in the Bronx in New York City, and he was raised in Pennsylvania. After getting his GED, he plans to learn how to be a barber. His release date is 2011.*