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Part-Time Economics Research Assistant to Work on “Environmental Markets”

Employer: *Robert N. Stavins*, Albert Pratt Professor of Business and Government, Harvard Kennedy School, Director of the Harvard Environmental Economics Program, Director of Graduate Studies for the Doctoral Program in Public Policy and the Doctoral Program in Political Economy and Government, Co-Chair of the Harvard Business School-Kennedy School Joint Degree Programs, Director of the Harvard Project on International Climate Agreements, University Fellow of Resources for the Future, Research Associate of the National Bureau of Economic Research, and Co-Editor of the *Review of Environmental Economics and Policy*. Professor Stavins is collaborating in this research project with *Dr. Robert Hahn*, former Senior Fellow and Executive Director, AEI Center for Regulatory and Market Studies, Washington, D.C.

Project: For a conference being organized at the University of Chicago to celebrate the 100th birthday of Ronald Coase, Nobel Laureate and author of "The Problem of Social Cost," we have been commissioned to write a paper on “environmental markets.” We wish to examine an implication of Coase's work that is exceptionally important today for real-world environmental policy around the world: the independence of the equilibrium allocation of allowances (and emissions) in a cap-and-trade system from the initial allocation, except under specific and limited conditions, such as particular types of transaction costs, market power, conditional allowance allocations, non-cost minimizing behavior by firms, and differential regulatory treatment of firms. We intend to investigate this topic both theoretically, drawing on the extensive strands of literature since Coase, and empirically, by assessing the impacts of initial allowance allocations on the performance of actual and planned cap-and-trade systems in the United States, Europe, Australia, and elsewhere.

Work: We know this intellectual and policy territory very well, but will benefit from the help of a talented Research Assistant, who could help us track down relevant papers in the theoretical and empirical literatures, summarize those papers in regard to their relevance for this research project, and help prepare for our presentation for the Chicago conference, December 4, 2009.

Qualifications: All economics concentrators are welcome to apply. Background in microeconomic theory is necessary (at the level of Econ 1010a or Econ 1011a); background in industrial organization, environmental economics, law & economics, econometrics all desirable, but by no means necessary. Strong writing ability particularly desirable.

Hours and Duration: Our plan is to do most of the research prior to the Chicago conference, prepare only a slide deck for the conference, get feedback from the attendees, and then begin to write the paper in January. Given this schedule, we would like to hire an RA who can start immediately, but the work load can be spread out. The schedule is flexible, but we anticipate approximately 10 hours per week, on average, over a period of several months.

Compensation: Competitive with other opportunities; base pay \$20 per hour.

How to Apply: Send brief e-mail explaining your interest, with a resume, transcript, writing sample, and – if possible – a letter recommendation to Professor Stavins at robert_stavins@harvard.edu. Applicants will be interviewed.