

RESOLUTION NO. 2018-02-005R

URBANA CLIMATE INHERITANCE RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, we are already witnessing the deadly effects of climate change around the world, notably through recent tropical storms, raging wildfires, dangerous heat waves, unprecedented droughts and flooding, and resulting famine; and

WHEREAS, the global scientific community warns that immediate action is necessary to prevent the increasingly disastrous repercussions of climate change and the impending humanitarian crisis; and

WHEREAS, young people and future generations will be forced to shoulder the burden of an inadequate response to this crisis for the entirety of their lives, threatening their inalienable right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; and

WHEREAS, the City of Urbana has long been a leader in sustainable practices, emphasizing green building practices in design guidelines, hosting the first Passive House built in the US in 2003, becoming the first Gold-Level Bicycle Friendly Community in Illinois in 2014, and recently leading the Solar Urbana-Champaign group purchasing effort, resulting in more than 1 megawatt of new solar installations to date; and

WHEREAS, Urbana is home to the University of Illinois flagship campus (UIUC), where Illinois native and current professor Nick Holonyak earned three degrees and went on to invent the light emitting diode (LED), which has been applied to consumer lighting resulting in significant reductions in greenhouse gas, and other UI researchers include internationally recognized climate modeling expert Donald Wuebbles, as well as Nobel laureates in critical energy applications in solid state physics and leaders in sustainable agriculture and biofuels; and

WHEREAS, the UIUC is also a leader in sustainable practices, installing a 20-acre solar farm, hosting the Institute for Sustainability, Energy, and the Environment (iSEE) which holds an annual congress, fostering collaboration and bringing students and researchers from around the world together to address the most challenging aspects of sustainable living; and

WHEREAS, the director of the UIUC Research Park came to the Urbana City Council in 2014 to present three technology clusters they chose to focus on for entrepreneurial assistance and economic development, one of which is energy; and

WHEREAS, Mayor Marlin signed the US Climate Mayors' letter to President Trump following his decision to withdraw the United States from the Paris Climate Agreement, stating that:

“Climate change is both the greatest single threat we face, and our greatest economic

opportunity for our nation. That is why we affirm our cities' commitments to taking every action possible to achieve the principles and goals of the Paris Climate Agreement, and to engage states, businesses and other sectors to join us.”; and

WHEREAS, the recent Future Energy Jobs Act (Public Act 99-0906) has made renewable energy in Illinois more economically efficient than ever before and demonstrated the powerful potential of a just transition to a green energy economy in terms of jobs and economic growth; and

WHEREAS, other cities across the nation have taken bold, effective action to address this issue, and Urbana has established itself as a leader in sustainability and a community dedicated to fostering a safe, equitable, and prosperous future for all people; and

WHEREAS, youth of Urbana have brought this Council a Youth Climate Report Card highlighting the gap between what we are doing today and actions that would be necessary to protect their future; and

WHEREAS, net carbon neutrality means any combination of carbon emissions reductions through efficiency or renewable energy, purchase of renewable energy credits, or purchase or generation of carbon offsets which brings a carbon budget to zero; and

WHEREAS, youth of Urbana have indicated a willingness to work with this Council on such actions;

NOW THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED, by the City Council, of the City of Urbana, Illinois, as follows:

Section 1:

The Urbana City Council commits to working constructively, using ingenuity, innovation, and courageous determination to achieve net carbon neutrality community-wide by 2040.

Section 2:

The City of Urbana will actively work toward generating 100 percent of the community's electricity from renewable sources by 2025.

Section 3:

The City of Urbana will actively seek partnerships with researchers to provide real-life application testing as needed and will continue to help promote healthy, sustainable community living that fosters creativity and encourages collaboration in order to incubate the human capital aspect of addressing the world's energy challenges.

Section 4:

A mechanism will be created for the ongoing inclusion of young people in the process of creating

and executing climate-related policies and actions.

PASSED BY THE CITY OF COUNCIL this 19th day of February, 2018.

AYES: Carried by unanimous voice vote

NAYS:

ABSTENTIONS:



Charles A. Smyth

 Charles A. Smyth, City Clerk

APPROVED BY THE MAYOR this 20th day of February, 2018:

Diane Wolfe Marlin

 Diane Wolfe Marlin, Mayor