

1 **RESOLUTION NO. 2016-26**

2 **A RESOLUTION OF THE ALBANY CITY COUNCIL URGING THE UNITED**
3 **STATES CONGRESS TO ENACT A REVENUE-NEUTRAL CARBON TAX**

4 **WHEREAS**, the average surface temperature on Earth has been increasing steadily,
5 with the ten warmest years ever recorded all occurring since 1998; and
6

7 **WHEREAS**, climate scientists overwhelmingly agree that an increase in
8 greenhouse gases in the atmosphere—carbon dioxide (CO₂) in particular—is causing the
9 increase in global temperature; and
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11 **WHEREAS**, humans burning carbon-based fossil fuels—coal, oil, and natural
12 gas—is the primary cause of the substantial and continuing increase of CO₂ in the
13 atmosphere; and
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15 **WHEREAS**, in May, 2013, the global atmospheric concentration of CO₂ reached
16 400 parts per million—the highest level in the last 800,000 years; and
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18 **WHEREAS**, it's predicted that by 2100 average global temperature will be 2°F to
19 11.5°F higher than now depending on the level of future greenhouse gas emissions; and
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21 **WHEREAS**, the Environmental Protection Agency has determined that current
22 and future greenhouse gas concentrations endanger public health, and according to the
23 Global Humanitarian Forum climate change is already responsible every year for some
24 300,000 deaths, 325 million people seriously affected, and economic losses worldwide of
25 U.S. \$125 billion; and
26

27 **WHEREAS**, climate change caused by global warming-related greenhouse gas
28 emissions including CO₂ already is leading to large-scale problems including ocean
29

1 acidification and rising sea levels; more frequent, extreme, and damaging weather events
2 such as heat waves, storms, heavy rainfall and flooding, and droughts; more frequent and
3 intense wildfires; disrupted ecosystems affecting biodiversity and food production; and an
4 increase in heat related deaths; and

5
6 **WHEREAS**, scientists have concluded that by 2100 as many as one in 10 species
7 may be on the verge of extinction due to climate change; and

8
9 **WHEREAS**, rising sea levels, reduced snow pack in the Sierras, and extreme
10 weather are issues that are beginning to affect the San Francisco Bay Area; sea level rise
11 in the Bay Area is expected to increase by sixteen inches by 2050 and fifty-five inches by
12 2100; and miles of shoreline and parks could be underwater, which could result in \$62
13 billion worth of infrastructure damage in the Bay Area; and

14
15 **WHEREAS**, by mid-century, the City of Albany could see three to four times as
16 many extreme heat days as we do today with related increases in hospitalizations and
17 deaths, especially for vulnerable populations such as seniors, young children, low-income
18 households; and

19
20 **WHEREAS**, the City of Albany has been a leader in the fight against climate
21 change, having adopted a Climate Action Plan in 2010, which aims to reduce the city's
22 carbon emissions to 25% below 2004 baseline emission levels by 2020; and

23
24 **WHEREAS**, the continued increase in global atmospheric CO₂ concentration
25 requires broader, more powerful policies to supplement local and regional efforts to
26 reduce emissions; and

27
28 **WHEREAS**, presently the environmental, health, and social costs of CO₂ emissions are
29

1 not included in prices paid for fossil fuels, but rather these externalized costs are borne
2 directly and indirectly by all Americans and global citizens; and

3
4 **WHEREAS**, to begin to correct this market failure, Congress can enact a national
5 carbon tax on fossil fuels, based on the amount of CO₂ the fuel will emit when burned;
6 and

7
8 **WHEREAS**, for efficient administration, fossil fuels can be taxed once, as far
9 upstream in the economy as practical, or at the port of entry into the United States; and

10
11 **WHEREAS**, a national, revenue-neutral carbon tax starting at a relatively low rate
12 and increasing steadily over future years is a market-based solution that would minimally
13 disrupt the economy while sending a clear and predictable price signal to businesses to
14 develop and use non-carbon-based energy resources; and

15
16 **WHEREAS**, if 100% of carbon tax revenue not necessary for program
17 administration is returned to households in equal shares, the majority of Americans will
18 break even or come out ahead, as their dividends match or exceed direct and indirect
19 price increases due to the tax, protecting lower and middle income households; and

20
21 **WHEREAS**, border adjustments—carbon content-based tariffs on products
22 imported from countries without comparable carbon pricing, and refunds to our exporters
23 of carbon taxes paid—can maintain the competitiveness of U.S. businesses in global
24 markets; and

25
26 **WHEREAS**, a national carbon tax can be implemented quickly and efficiently, and
27 respond to the urgency of the climate crisis, because the federal government already has
28 in place mechanisms, such as the Internal Revenue Service, needed to implement and
29 enforce the tax, and already collects taxes from fossil fuel producers and importers; and

1 **WHEREAS**, a national carbon tax would make the United States a leader in
2 mitigating climate change and in the clean energy technologies of the 21st Century, and
3 would incentivize other countries to enact similar carbon taxes, reducing global CO₂
4 emissions without the need for complex international agreements; and
5

6 **WHEREAS**, the goals of a national carbon tax to reduce CO₂ emissions are
7 consistent with state and local programs designed to mitigate climate change, such as
8 California's AB32 and Albany's Climate Action Plan; and
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10 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Albany City Council hereby
11 urges the United States Congress to enact without delay a tax on carbon-based fossil
12 fuels; and
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14 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the tax should be collected once, as far
15 upstream in the economy as practical, or at the port of entry into the United States; and
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17 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the tax rate should start low and increase
18 steadily and predictably, to achieve the goal of reducing U.S. CO₂ emissions to 10% of
19 1990 levels by 2050; and
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21 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that tax revenue should be returned to
22 households to protect low and middle income Americans from the impact of rising prices
23 due to the tax; and
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25 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the international competitiveness of U.S.
26 businesses should be protected by using border tariffs and tax refunds.
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28 

29 _____
PETER MAASS, MAYOR



City of Albany

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RESOLUTION NO. 2016-26

PASSED AND APPROVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ALBANY,

the 5th day of July, 2016, by the following votes:

AYES: Council Members Barnes, McQuaid, Nason, Pilch and Mayor Maass

NOES: none

ABSENT: none

ABSTAINED: none

RECUSED: none

WITNESS MY HAND AND THE SEAL OF THE CITY OF ALBANY, this

6th day of July, 2016.

Eileen Harrington
DEPUTY CITY CLERK

The City of Albany is dedicated to maintaining its small town ambiance, responding to the needs of a diverse community, and providing a safe, healthy and sustainable community.