

## **Resolution Urging the United States Congress to Pass Carbon Fee and Dividend Legislation**

By Alderperson Murtagh: Seconded by Alderperson Kerslick

WHEREAS, climate scientists worldwide are in near-unanimous agreement that the planet Earth is warming rapidly and to a degree that is perilous to human civilization, to numerous species, and to the global ecosystem; and

WHEREAS, human activity is a significant contributor to global warming, especially through the accelerating combustion of fossil fuels that create carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases as a byproduct; and

WHEREAS, the City of Ithaca Common Council has a record of acknowledging the reality of climate change as well as the city's responsibility to reduce its contribution to the causes of global warming, as evidenced by the City of Ithaca's Energy Action Plan and Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, a prompt and major shift away from fossil fuels is a necessary cornerstone to any meaningful response to global warming; and

WHEREAS, a steadily increasing fee on fossil fuels at the point of their entry into the economy would be straightforward and make effective use of free-market mechanisms to promote the transition to greater energy conservation and renewable sources of energy; and

WHEREAS, this revenue-neutral carbon fee and dividend is an effective method to reduce carbon emissions for the following reasons:

- 1) The fee would motivate everyone to conserve and adopt renewable energy without the need for extensive governmental regulatory controls or infrastructure, encouraging consumers and the market to replace consumption of carbon-based energy with innovative, sustainable energy sources, whether by being more efficient or choosing other, less carbon intensive energy sources; and
- 2) The fee would employ a market approach to encourage innovative processes, not only in energy production, but also in every field in which energy is consumed, e.g. electric cars, mass transportation, architectural planning and construction, water heating, lighting, and air conditioning in residential and commercial buildings;
- 3) Levying the fee at the point of production would be more efficient, less expensive and provide more accurate signals than would doing so at the point of consumption;
- 4) The fee would incentivize the development and use of alternative energies and attendant technologies, eliminating the need for government subsidies that attempt to forecast alternative energy winners and losers;
- 5) Because the fee is levied on the same basis on all businesses, it is fairer to every business and easier to administer than alternatives, such as a cap and trade system;

6) A border adjustment would assess a fee on goods traded with countries without a comparable carbon price, thereby maintain the competitiveness of US businesses and discourage relocation to such countries; and

WHEREAS, such a policy would protect lower and middle-income households, as the dividend would allow more than 70% of American households to benefit financially, break even, or have only minimal increased costs from this policy; the policy would also create jobs, as the dividend puts money back into local economies; and

WHEREAS, further delay in responding to this crisis increases the risk of catastrophic climate change, imminently threatens low-lying coastal areas and land and sea species, threatens water supplies, increases the frequency of severe weather events, increases the cost of undertaking adequate responses, and increases risks to the global economy; now, therefore be it

**RESOLVED**, That the Ithaca Common Council endorses a carbon fee and dividend and urges our representatives in the United States Congress to enact it into law, and be it further

**RESOLVED**, That the City Clerk is hereby directed to send a copy of this Resolution to the City's representatives in Congress.

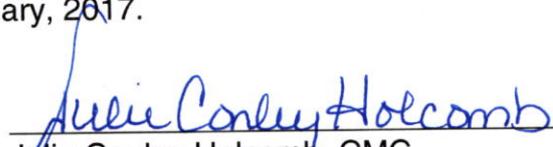
Ayes (9) McGonigal, Murtagh, Nguyen, Gearhart, Fleming, Smith, Kerslick,  
Mohlenhoff, Martell  
Nays (1) Brock  
Abstentions (0)

**Carried**

**STATE OF NEW YORK**  
**COUNTY OF TOMPKINS**                    **SS:**  
**CITY OF ITHACA**

I, Julie Conley Holcomb, City Clerk of the City of Ithaca, do hereby certify that the foregoing resolution is a true and exact copy of a resolution duly adopted by the Common Council of said City of Ithaca at a regular meeting held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> day of November, 2016, and that the same is a complete copy of the whole of such resolution.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, I have hereunto set my hand and the Corporate Seal of the City of Ithaca, this 9<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2017.

  
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Julie Conley Holcomb, CMC  
City Clerk  
City of Ithaca, New York