



RESOLUTION 17-110

Resolution Urging the United States Congress to Address Climate Change by Enacting Matched Carbon Fee and Dividend Legislation

WHEREAS, Overwhelming scientific evidence exists that the earth's climate is changing, including the warming of atmosphere and oceans, sea-level rise, loss of glaciers and sea ice, and alterations to weather systems. This is evident with certainty to be in response to the human release of greenhouse gases, the most prominent of which is CO₂ from the burning of carbon based fuels.

WHEREAS, In 2014, two separate papers published in the journals Science and Geophysical Research Letter documented dramatic retreats of Antarctic glaciers and predicted that large-scale destruction of the West Antarctic ice sheet was likely inevitable and would lead to sea level rises of ten feet or more; and the 2014 National Climate Assessment found that continued warming of the atmosphere will cause New Jersey to experience heat waves; sea-level rise; flooding; threats to infrastructure; and harms to agriculture.

WHEREAS, The global atmospheric concentration of CO₂ has now surpassed 400 parts per million; and conservative scientific models estimate that to achieve climate stabilization and avoid cataclysmic climate change, emissions of greenhouse gases (GHGs) must be brought to 80% below 1990 levels by 2050.

WHEREAS, Presently the environmental, health, and social costs of carbon emissions are not included in prices paid for fossil fuels, but rather these externalized costs are borne by all persons without their consent.

WHEREAS, To begin to correct this market failure, Congress can impose a national carbon fee on the extraction, production, or importation of fossil fuels, based on the amount of CO₂ the fuel will emit when burned. Starting this uniform fee at a low rate and increasing it steadily over future years would cause minimum disruption to the economy while encouraging businesses to develop and use non-carbon based energy sources.

WHEREAS, The Citizens' Climate Education Corporation (CCEC) contracted a third party, Regional Economic Modeling, Inc. (REMI) to do a nation-wide macroeconomic study on the impact of a revenue-neutral carbon tax or fee. It assumed that administration costs would be deducted from the revenue, with the net total being distributed equally as a dividend to all U.S. households with the goal of protecting low and middle income Americans from the impact of rising fuel prices due to the fee. This study predicted that, after 10 years, the carbon fee and dividend would lead to a decrease in CO₂ emissions by 33 percent, an increase in national employment of 2.1 million jobs, and an average monthly dividend for a family of four of \$288.

WHEREAS, A revenue neutral national carbon fee and dividend can be implemented quickly and efficiently because the federal government already has agencies in place, such as the Internal Revenue Service, to collect the fee and already collects taxes from fossil fuel producers and importers. Border tariff adjustments on products imported from countries without comparable carbon pricing, and refunds of carbon fees or taxes paid to our exporters can maintain the competitiveness of U.S. businesses in global markets.

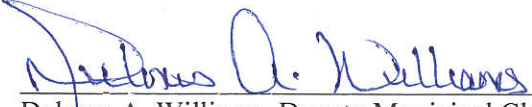
WHEREAS, A national carbon fee and dividend would make the United States a leader in mitigating climate change and in the clean energy technologies of the 21st Century. Other countries would have the incentive to enact similar carbon fees, reducing global CO₂ emissions without the need for further international agreements; and therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Mayor and Council urges the United States Congress to enact without delay a simple fee on carbon-based fuels to be collected once, as far upstream in the economy as practical; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the fee rate should start low and increase steadily and predictably to achieve the goal of reducing U.S. CO2 emissions to 10% of 1990 levels by 2050; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That all revenue, net of administration, should be returned as a dividend to all U.S. households in equal measure.

I, Delores A. Williams, Deputy Municipal Clerk of Princeton, County of Mercer, State of New Jersey, do hereby certify that foregoing is a true copy of a resolution adopted by Princeton Council at its meeting held March 27, 2017.


Delores A. Williams, Deputy Municipal Clerk