

RESOLUTION**RECOGNIZING CLIMATE CHANGE AND URGING CONGRESS TO LEVY A REVENUE- NEUTRAL FEE ON CARBON IN FOSSIL FUELS.**

WHEREAS, climate scientists worldwide are in near-unanimous agreement that the Earth is warming rapidly which is causing changes in climate that are perilous to the Earth's natural systems and to human civilization; and

WHEREAS, the primary cause of that warming is human activity, especially through the combustion of fossil fuels which emit greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide (CO₂); and

WHEREAS, the United Nations International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has concluded that warming of 1.5°C or higher above pre-industrial levels increases the risk associated with long-lasting or irreversible changes; and

WHEREAS, a report by the IPCC released on October 8th, 2018, found that limiting global warming to 1.5°C would require "rapid and far-reaching" transitions in land, energy, industry, building, transport, and city systems. Global net human-caused emissions of carbon dioxide (CO₂) would need to fall by about 45 percent from 2010 levels by 2030, reaching net zero around 2050, leaving our international community 12 years to change course; and

WHEREAS, in 2018, the City of Eau Claire set a goal to achieve a transition to 100% renewable energy and carbon neutrality community-wide by 2050; and

WHEREAS, the continued use of fossil fuels is being supported by a market failure whereby the costs of carbon emissions are not included in the price of fossil fuels; and

WHEREAS, the urgent need to transition away from fossil fuels can be accomplished with a market-based program, namely a revenue-neutral carbon fee on fossil fuel producers with a corresponding rebate or dividend to consumers; and

WHEREAS, using a revenue-neutral carbon fee and dividend to reduce carbon emissions would have the following benefits:

- The carbon fee would incentivize the development and use of energy efficiency and low-carbon energy sources and minimize the need for onerous governmental energy regulations and subsidies that attempt to forecast winners and losers.
- The transition to low-carbon energy sources would provide a range of additional benefits including enhanced public health, job creation and strengthening of the U.S. economy, increased energy security, and increased local energy development in rural areas.

- Even though the carbon fee would temporarily increase energy costs including electric rates and the cost of living, those costs would be offset by the revenue returned to households on an equal basis as a dividend such that the bottom 55-60% of households by income would break even or receive more in dividends than they would pay in higher living expenses.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Eau Claire City Council strongly urges the United States Congress to recognize the broad scientific consensus regarding climate change, and to take action to slow or reverse its effects by passing legislation that levies an annually increasing revenue-neutral fee on the carbon in fossil fuels at the point of production or importation, that would be sufficient to:

- Encourage individuals and businesses to produce and use less fossil fuel.
- Make the transition from fossil fuels less onerous to consumers and to the economy by returning to Americans on an equal basis all of the revenues gained from the fee.
- Reduce U.S. CO2 emissions to 10% of 1990 levels by 2050.
- Encourage similar actions by other nations trading with the United States, by suitable carbon-content-based fees for imports, and rebates for exports, to nations that have not taken such actions.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Clerk is directed to send a copy of this resolution to the Governor of the State of Wisconsin and those members of Congress, State Assembly and State Senate representing the citizens of the City of Eau Claire.

Adopted,
November 27, 2018

(SEAL) _____
Vice President/Acting President
Andrew F. Werthmann

(SEAL) _____
City Manager Dale Peters

(ATTESTED) _____
City Clerk Carrie L. Riepl