

RESOLUTION NO. 185-2022 (MSES),
First Reading

By: Council Members Moore and Larson

A Resolution declaring climate change an emergency that threatens our city, region, state, nation, humanity, and the natural world, and which demands a massive-scale mobilization to address, mitigate, and prepare for the impacts of climate change; and declaring the necessity that this Resolution become immediately effective as an emergency.

WHEREAS, the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has made clear that we are in a global climate emergency by documenting the extent, speed, and acceleration of global climate change and planetary warming and their dramatic effects on our Earth; and

WHEREAS, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration has determined that climate change is already increasing the frequency of extreme weather and other climate-related disasters, including fresh-water scarcity and droughts, floods, extreme weather events, increased heat, wildfires, accelerating ice mass loss that will result in sea-level rise, and species extinction; and

WHEREAS, the National Climate Assessment found that climate change due to global warming has caused, and is expected to cause additional, substantial interference with and growing losses to infrastructure, property, industry, recreation, natural resources, agricultural systems, human health and safety, the U.S. economy, and quality of life in the United States, underscoring the need for immediate climate emergency action at all levels of government; and

WHEREAS, climate-related natural disasters have increased exponentially over the past decade, costing the United States more than double the long-term average during the period of 2014 through 2018, with the National Centers for Environmental Information reporting total global costs of natural disasters from 2016 to 2021 exceeding \$100 billion each year; and

WHEREAS, in 2019, the United Nations Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services found that human-induced climate change is pushing the planet toward a sixth mass species extinction, with experts estimating our current species loss to be between 1,000 and 10,000 times higher than the natural extinction rate, and loss of biodiversity threatens the food security, water supply, and the health of humans, and has been proven to increase the likelihood of zoonotic diseases such as COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, critical tipping points must be avoided, as they will have, and are already having, cascading feedback effects that are predicted to cause an increasingly uncontrollable

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climate emergency, and with current greenhouse gas (GHG) emission levels, many of these tipping points will be passed by 2040 or sooner; and

WHEREAS, the October 8, 2018, special report of the IPCC projected that curtailing warming to 1.5°C to reduce the risks to health, livelihoods, food security, water supply, human security, economic growth, and plant and animal life this century will require an unprecedented transformation of every sector of the global economy over the subsequent 12 years; and

WHEREAS, climate change is already inflicting, and will continue to inflict, substantial damages to the Northeast Ohio region's physical, social, and economic well-being, and our regional climate change impacts, such as increased flooding, will continue to worsen; and

WHEREAS, to avoid irreversible, catastrophic climate change impacts, we cannot only focus on reducing emissions but must also dramatically increase and enable meaningful carbon sequestration while also preparing our community for significant climate impacts, and the current pace and scale of national climate action is not sufficient to avert substantial damage to the economy, environment, and human health over the coming decades; and

WHEREAS, biodiverse green spaces, notably forests, wetlands, and riparian setbacks, must be protected and enhanced, as they are vital for environmental sustainability and regeneration by providing greater carbon sequestration, diminishing urban heat islands, reducing the harmful effects of air pollution, increasing stormwater retention and filtration, and protecting against soil erosion; and

WHEREAS, marginalized communities worldwide, including people of color, immigrants, indigenous communities, low-income people, those with disabilities, and the unhoused, are disproportionately affected by climate change and must benefit from a just transition to reach zero GHG emissions with a sustainable and equitable economy; and

WHEREAS, the massive scope and scale of action necessary to stabilize the climate will require unprecedented levels of public awareness, engagement, and deliberation to develop and implement effective, just, and equitable policies to address the climate crisis; and

WHEREAS, as part of the City's commitment to working toward racial equity in all its actions, and the City's established priorities, in particular housing quality and affordability as well as economic development, it is vital that the City's climate-related actions thoroughly integrate these commitments.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Cleveland Heights, Ohio, that:

SECTION 1. The City of Cleveland Heights joins with communities across the United States and the world to declare that we are in a climate emergency that threatens our community

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and others in our nation and worldwide and requires mobilizing more aggressive action on all our parts.

SECTION 2. The City of Cleveland Heights does hereby require urgent and immediate mobilization of public and private resources to mitigate global warming and prepare for the impacts of escalating climate change.

SECTION 3. Notice of the passage of this Resolution shall be given by publishing the title and abstract of its contents, prepared by the Director of Law, once in one newspaper of general circulation in the City of Cleveland Heights.

SECTION 4. This Resolution is hereby declared to be an emergency measure immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety of the inhabitants of the City of Cleveland Heights, such emergency being the urgent need to declare climate change an emergency and mobilize resources to address, mitigate, and prepare for the impacts of climate change. Wherefore, provided it receives the affirmative vote of five (5) or more of the members elected or appointed to this Council, this Resolution shall take effect and be in force immediately upon its passage; otherwise, it shall take effect and be in force from and after the earliest time allowed by law.

SECTION 5 The Clerk of Council is hereby authorized and directed to forward a certified copy of this Resolution to President Joe Biden, Vice-President Kamala Harris, Governor Mike DeWine, U.S. Representative Shontel Brown, U.S. Senator Sherrod Brown, U.S. Senator-elect J. D. Vance, State Senator–elect Kent Smith, and State Representative Bishara W. Addison.



MELODY JOY HART
President of the Council



ADDIE BALESTER
Clerk of Council

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PASSED: 12/16/2022

Presented to the Mayor: 12/16/2022 Approved: 12/19/2022



KAHLIL SEREN
Mayor