

RESOLUTION NO. 68,486–N.S.

ENDORISING THE DECLARATION OF A CLIMATE EMERGENCY

WHEREAS, human activities have warmed the Earth enough to end the 12,000-year period of climate stability that allowed agriculture and human civilization to develop; and

WHEREAS, the world came together in December 2015 to address the end to this period of climate stability due to global warming, agreeing to keep warming to “well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels” and to “pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C”; and

WHEREAS, in 2017 the global surface temperature was over 1°C warmer than the pre-industrial base period;¹ and

WHEREAS, global warming has already set in motion catastrophic changes to the Earth system, including accelerating ice mass loss from the Greenland and West Antarctic Ice Sheets and the thawing of the borders of the vast Arctic permafrost, which holds twice as much stored carbon as the entire atmosphere; and

WHEREAS, according to the latest climate projections, humanity is on track to warm the Earth a sustained average of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels as soon as 2026;² and

WHEREAS, the Greenland Ice Sheet, which is likely to completely collapse at 1.6°C warming, which NASA scientists have concluded would lead to 23 feet of sea-level rise, billions of climate refugees, and a “global-scale catastrophe”; and

WHEREAS, it is estimated that sustained 1.5°C warming could cause a long-term, “continuous thaw” of the Arctic permafrost, which could turn the tundra from carbon sink into source in the 2020s; and

WHEREAS, such tipping points must be avoided at all costs, as they will have positive feedback effects on the climate system, causing further and increasingly uncontrollable global warming; and

WHEREAS, failure to uphold the Paris goal of keeping warming “well below 2°C” would lead to the disappearance of island nations and “certain death” for Africa, Chief Negotiator for the G77 Lumumba Stanislaus Di-Aping warned in 2009; and

¹ Hansen, James, et al., Global Temperature in 2017 (18 January 2018).

² See, *inter alia*, Henley, B. J., and A. D. King (2017), *Trajectories toward the 1.5°C Paris target: Modulation by the Interdecadal Pacific Oscillation*, *Geophys. Res. Lett.*, 44, 4256–4262, doi: 10.1002/2017GL073480; Jacob, D. , Kotova, L. , Teichmann, C. , Sobolowski, S. P., Vautard, R. , Donnelly, C. , Koutroulis, A. G., Grillakis, M. G., Tsanis, I. K., Damm, A. , Sakalli, A. and van Vliet, M. T. (2018), *Climate Impacts in Europe Under +1.5°C Global Warming*. *Earth's Future*, 6: 264-285. doi:10.1002/2017EF000710

WHEREAS, over 19,000 scientists have signed a Second Warning to Humanity proclaiming that “a great change in our stewardship of the Earth and the life on it is required, if vast human misery is to be avoided”; and

WHEREAS, it is estimated that humanity currently uses the equivalent of about 1.6 earths per year in resource consumption and waste disposal, a figure that is headed toward 3 earths per year in 2030; and

WHEREAS, the global economy’s overshoot of ecological limits and, increasingly, climate change are driving a global fresh water scarcity crisis and the sixth mass extinction of species, which could devastate much of life on Earth for the next 10 million years; and

WHEREAS, England’s chief scientific advisor has warned that humanity faces a “perfect storm of global events” by 2030 as climate change, population growth, and growing demand for food, energy and fresh water incites violent conflict over diminishing resources that are essential to human life and dignity; and

WHEREAS, climate change has been called a “threat multiplier” that exacerbates pre-existing tensions and political instability in regions across the globe by both the United States Department of Defense and North Atlantic Treaty Organization, and has been linked to the Syrian war, the rise of Boko Haram in Nigeria, as well as the famines, water shortages, and resulting conflict in Yemen, Somalia, and South Sudan; and

WHEREAS, climate-fueled droughts, famines, and diseases have already killed millions of people in the Global South, and displaced millions more;³ and

WHEREAS, indigenous and low-income communities and communities of color in the United States and abroad have suffered the gravest consequences of the extractive economy since its inception; and

WHEREAS, according to the National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI), in 2017, “the U.S. was impacted by 16 separate billion-dollar disaster events tying 2011 for the record number of billion-dollar disasters for an entire calendar year,” with a cumulative cost of \$309.5 billion, shattering the previous U.S. annual record cost of \$219.2 billion in 2005 due to Hurricanes Dennis, Katrina, Rita and Wilma;⁴ and

³ A 2009 report estimated that “climate change causes 400,000 deaths on average each year today, mainly due to hunger and communicable diseases that affect above all children in developing countries.” It further noted, “Our present carbon-intensive energy system and related activities cause an estimated 4.5 million deaths each year linked to air pollution, hazardous occupations and cancer.” A Guide to the Cold Calculus of a Hot Planet, Climate Vulnerability Monitor 2nd Edition.

⁴ In fact, NCEI notes, “2017 arguably has more events than 2011 given that [its] analysis traditionally counts all U.S. billion-dollar wildfires, as regional-scale, seasonal events, not as multiple isolated events.” NOAA NCEI U.S. Billion-Dollar Weather and Climate Disasters (2018).

WHEREAS, the death and destruction already wrought by global warming of 1°C demonstrate that the earth is already too hot for safety and justice; and

WHEREAS, it is an act of unspeakable injustice and cruelty to knowingly subject our fellow humans now and into the future to societal disintegration, food and clean water shortages, economic collapse, and early death on an increasingly uninhabitable planet; and

WHEREAS, Pope Francis has declared that humanity is on the verge of a “global suicide,” noting that we will destroy ourselves if we destroy God’s creation, and has called for a life-sustaining economy; and

WHEREAS, common sense and morality indicate that humanity can no longer safely emit greenhouse gases and must seek to draw down the excess carbon from the atmosphere in order to restore a safe level of greenhouse gas concentrations and global average temperatures well below today’s levels and back to preindustrial levels as quickly as possible; and

WHEREAS, reversing global warming and restoring a safe and stable climate requires an emergency mobilization to reach zero greenhouse gas emissions across all sectors at wartime speed, to rapidly and safely drawdown or remove all the excess carbon from the atmosphere, and to implement safe measures to protect all people and species from the consequences of abrupt warming in the near-term; and

WHEREAS, reversing ecological overshoot and halting the sixth mass extinction requires an effort to preserve and restore half Earth’s biodiversity in interconnected wildlife corridors and to humanely stabilize population. as well as a shift toward a climate-resilient society and culture that prioritize conservation, community, and mutual aid over consumerism and narcissism; and

WHEREAS, justice requires that those countries, classes, and industries that have contributed the most to this global climate and ecological cataclysm carry a commensurate burden in reversing it and protecting those most impacted from the lethal impacts already underway; and

WHEREAS, justice also requires, in developing and carrying out the emergency mobilization to restore a safe climate, the active consultation, participation, and protection of communities that have historically borne the brunt of the extractive economy; and

WHEREAS, the United States of America has disproportionately contributed to the climate and ecological crises and to preventing a transition away from fossil fuels, and Americans thus bear an extraordinary responsibility to solve the crises; and

WHEREAS, as a part of the United States, the community of Berkeley and surrounding

counties, despite well-meaning efforts, have disproportionately contributed to dangerous greenhouse gas emissions and thus must substantially curtail use of fossil fuels and greenhouse gas emissions on behalf of the larger planetary community to enable a rapid, just transition to a stable climate; and

WHEREAS, severe rainfall in February 2017 across northern and central California resulted in at least five deaths and an estimated \$1.5 billion in damage, including to the Oroville Dam spillway, causing a multi-day evacuation of 188,000 residents, and to the city of San Jose, flooding neighborhoods and forcing 14,000 residents out of their homes; and

WHEREAS, the October 2017 Northern California wildfires caused more than \$9.4 billion in damage, destroying over 8,900 structures, displacing many people, killing 44, and injuring another 192; and

WHEREAS, we cannot wait for more devastating floods, heatwaves, fires, droughts, rising sea levels, and public health and humanitarian crises that threaten local residents, ecologies, businesses, and the broader Bay Area population to begin the necessary emergency response; and

WHEREAS, during World War II, the Bay Area came together across race, age, class, gender and other differences in an extraordinary regional mobilization, building and repairing Liberty ships, converting car assembly plants into tank manufacturing facilities, rapidly switching to mass transit systems, and serving as the most important symbol of freedom in the Pacific Theater during the war as well as the site of the signing of the United Nations Charter at its conclusion; and

WHEREAS, the following mayors in the greater Bay Area have committed to adopt, honor, and uphold the Paris agreement, noting, “We will intensify efforts to meet each of our cities’ current climate goals, push for new action to meet the 1.5 degrees Celsius target, and work together to create a 21st century clean energy economy . . . The world cannot wait—and neither will we”: Mayor Jesse Arreguin of Berkeley, Mayor Peggy McQuaid of Albany, Mayor Trish Herrera Spencer of Alameda, Mayor Charles Stone of Belmont, Mayor Lori S Liu of Brisbane, Mayor Ricardo Ortiz of Burlingame, Mayor Mark Landman of Cotati, Mayor Darcy Paul of Cupertino, Mayor Juslyn Manalo of Daly City, Mayor David Haubert of Dublin, Mayor Janet Abelson of El Cerrito, Mayor John J. Bauters of Emeryville, Mayor Lily Mei of Fremont, Mayor Debbie Ruddock of Half Moon Bay, Mayor Barbara Halliday of Hayward, Mayor Shaun McCaffery of Healdsburg, Mayor Mary Prochnow of Los Altos, Mayor Gary Waldeck of Los Altos Hills, Mayor Marico Sayoc of Los Gatos, Mayor Rob Schroder of Martinez, Mayor Kirsten Keith of Menlo Park, Mayor Reuben D. Holober of Millbrae, Mayor Ken Rosenberg of Mountain View, Mayor Jill Techel of Napa, Mayor Libby Schaaf of Oakland, Mayor Greg Scharff of Palo Alto, Mayor David Glass of Petaluma, Mayor John Seybert of Redwood City, Mayor Jake Mackenzie of Rohnert Park, Mayor Tom Butt of Richmond, Mayor Bob Grassilli of San Carlos, Mayor Mark Farrell of San Francisco, Mayor Sam Liccardo of San Jose, Mayor Pauline Russo Cutter of San Leandro, Mayor Rick Bonilla of San

Mateo, Mayor Lisa M. Gillmor of Santa Clara, Mayor Chris Coursey of Santa Rosa, Mayor Rachel Hundley of Sonoma, Mayor Glenn Hendricks of Sunnyvale, and Mayor Debora Fudge of Windsor; and

WHEREAS, the Global Climate Action Summit, the purpose of which is to “bring people together from around the world to showcase climate action and inspire deeper commitments from national governments, and each other, in support of the Paris Agreement,” will be held in San Francisco in September 2018; and

WHEREAS, the community of Berkeley and surrounding counties have the insight, drive, capacity and capital to take a moral stand and do all we can to restore a safe climate within our own boundaries and on behalf of our planetary community; and

WHEREAS, in Berkeley and the broader Bay Area, we can rise to the challenge of the greatest crisis in history by organizing politically to catalyze a national and global climate emergency effort, employing local workers in a mobilization effort building and installing renewable energy infrastructure, growing healthy food that stays in the community, restoring ecosystems, and retrofitting and redesigning our built environment, electric grid, and transportation systems; and

WHEREAS, the Global Climate Action Summit presents an unparalleled opportunity for the City of Berkeley and the greater Bay Area to inspire and influence summit attendees to end emissions from all sources at emergency speed through a just mobilization and, in so doing, to affect the course of human history; and

WHEREAS, the Berkeley Climate Action Coalition has laid the foundation for a just emergency climate mobilization through its work, including raising the profile of and implementing key goals of the Berkeley Climate Action Plan, championing community choice energy for Alameda County, enhancing Berkeley’s biking and pedestrian access by promoting complete streets projects, developing local guidelines and policy to promote vacant lot conversion to community gardens and sponsoring water saving projects and education during record-breaking drought; and

WHEREAS, the City of Berkeley can act as a global leader by both converting to an ecologically, socially and economically restorative economy, and by catalyzing a unified regional climate emergency mobilization effort this year.

NOW BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, by the Council of the City of Berkeley that the City of Berkeley declares that we face an existential Climate Emergency that threatens our city, region, state, nation, civilization, humanity and the natural world.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the City of Berkeley endorses a just citywide emergency mobilization effort to end citywide greenhouse gas emissions as quickly as possible and immediately initiates an effort to safely draw down carbon from the atmosphere.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the City of Berkeley commits to help educate our

residents about the climate emergency and work to catalyze a just emergency climate mobilization at the local, state, national, and global local to protect our residents as well as all the people and species of the world.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the City of Berkeley underscores the need for full community participation and support, and recognizes that the residents of Berkeley, the Berkeley Climate Action Coalition, the Ecology Center, and other community organizations will be integral to the mobilization effort.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the City of Berkeley commits to keeping the considerations of disadvantaged communities central to all climate emergency mobilization planning processes and to inviting and encouraging such communities to actively participate in order to advocate directly for their needs.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the City of Berkeley, in order to ensure a just transition, will consult with environmental justice, economic justice, and racial justice organizations at every step of the climate emergency mobilization planning process.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the City of Berkeley calls for a Regional Just Transition and Climate Emergency Mobilization Collaborative Effort, inviting concerned residents, youth, faith, labor, racial and environmental justice, and economic and social justice organizations as well as other community groups, and all elected officials in and from Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Solano, and Sonoma Counties, and especially all the mayors who have signed on to enact the Paris Agreement, to initiate a just local, state, national, and global climate emergency mobilization to restore a safe climate.

BE IT THERE RESOLVED, the City of Berkeley seeks to partner with local and regional agencies to participate in this regional emergency just mobilization effort and to intensify support of a comprehensive just transition to restore a safe climate.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the City of Berkeley will coordinate with other organizations and agencies to organize a regional emergency town hall in advance of the September 2018 Global Climate Action Summit to begin to envision the Regional Just Transition and Climate Emergency Mobilization Collaborative Effort.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the City of Berkeley calls on the State of California to initiate a just statewide emergency mobilization effort to reverse global warming, which, with appropriate financial and regulatory assistance from Federal authorities, ends statewide greenhouse gas emissions as quickly as possible and immediately initiates an effort to safely draw down carbon from the atmosphere.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the City of Berkeley calls on the United States of America to initiate a just national emergency mobilization effort to reverse global warming, which ends national greenhouse gas emissions as quickly as possible and immediately initiates an effort to safely draw down carbon from the atmosphere.

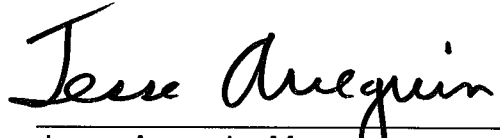
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the City of Berkeley calls on all governments and peoples worldwide to initiate a just global emergency mobilization effort to reverse global warming, which ends global greenhouse gas emissions as quickly as possible and immediately initiates an effort to safely draw down carbon from the atmosphere.

The foregoing Resolution was adopted by the Berkeley City Council on June 12, 2018 by the following vote:

Ayes: Davila, Droste, Hahn, Harrison, Maio, Wengraf, Worthington and Arreguin.

Noes: None.

Absent: Bartlett.



Jesse Arreguin, Mayor

Attest: 

Mark Numainville, City Clerk