

CITY OF OBERLIN, OHIO

RESOLUTION No. R12-05 CMS

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF OBERLIN TO ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY ADMINISTRATOR LISA P. JACKSON IN SUPPORT OF REDUCING GREENHOUSE GAS POLLUTION UNDER THE CLEAN AIR ACT AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

WHEREAS, the decade from 2000 to 2010 was the warmest on record, and 2005 and 2010 tied for the hottest years on record; and

WHEREAS, the current level of CO₂ in the atmosphere is approximately 392 parts per million (ppm); and

WHEREAS, one of the world's leading climate scientists, Dr. James Hansen, stated in 2008: "If humanity wishes to preserve a planet similar to that on which civilization developed and to which life on Earth is adapted, paleoclimate evidence and climate change suggest that CO₂ will need to be reduced from its current 385ppm to at most 350ppm"; and

WHEREAS, according to the Global Humanitarian Forum climate change is already responsible every year for some 300,000 deaths, 325 million people seriously affected, and economic losses worldwide of U.S. \$125 billion; and

WHEREAS, extreme weather events are striking with increased frequency, with deadly consequences for people and wildlife; in the United States alone:

- 2005 had the most hurricanes on record since 1851;
- blizzards plagued the Northeast during the winter of 2011;
- intense rainfall and snowmelt forced the Mississippi River to overflow its banks across the Midwest and South in summer 2011;
- the unprecedented 2011 Texas drought lead the U.S. Department of Agriculture to declare the entire state a natural disaster zone;
- heat waves scorched the Midwest and East in summer 2011, with many cities hitting record-high temperatures and for example, Oklahoma on pace to break its record for days over 100 degrees; and

WHEREAS, climate change is threatening food security as crop growth and yields diminish and droughts, floods and changes in snowpack depth are disrupting water supplies; and

WHEREAS, scientists have concluded that by 2100 as many as one in 10 species may be on the verge of extinction due to climate change; and

WHEREAS, the world's ice is rapidly melting threatening water supplies, raising sea levels, and jeopardizing ice-dependent animals so severely that Arctic summer sea ice is half the area and thickness it was several decades ago; and

WHEREAS, according to Scientific American, sea level is rising faster along the U.S. East Coast than it has for at least 2,000 years, and is accelerating in pace, threatening coastal wildlife and the 40 percent of the world's population that lives within 60 miles of the coast; and

WHEREAS, for four decades, the Clean Air Act has protected the air we breathe through a proven, comprehensive, successful system of pollution control that saves lives and creates economic benefits exceeding its costs by many times; and

WHEREAS, with the Clean Air Act, air quality in this country has improved significantly since 1970, despite major growth both in our economy and industrial production; and

WHEREAS, between 1970 and 1990, the six main pollutants covered by the Clean Air Act — particulate matter and ground-level ozone (both of which contribute to smog and asthma), carbon monoxide, lead, sulfur and nitrogen oxides (the acid gases that cause acid rain) — were reduced by between 47 percent and 93 percent, and airborne lead was virtually eliminated; and

WHEREAS, the Clean Air Act has produced economic benefits valued at \$2 trillion or 30 times the cost of regulation; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in Massachusetts vs. EPA (2007) that greenhouse gases are “air pollutants” as defined by the Clean Air Act and the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them; and

WHEREAS, The City of Oberlin prides itself on being a leader in the fight against climate change and for clean air as evidenced by:

- Passage of Resolution R01-08 CMS in 2001 adopting a Sustainability Policy for the City;
- Establishment of a Sustainable Reserve Fund in 2007 to finance local efforts in reducing GHG emissions;
- Joining of ICLEI (International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives) in 2007, and commitment to carry out five milestones in the climate protection program;
- Funding and assisting POWER (Providing Oberlin With Efficiency Responsibly) beginning in 2008, to insulate and upgrade households thereby reducing energy bills;
- Signing a Memorandum of Understanding with the Clinton Climate Initiative in 2010 committing the City to collaborate with local, national and international partners to be a model of Climate Positive Development and to participate in the development of Climate Positive Metrics and GHG emission protocols in cooperation with CCI, USGBC and other first stage developments;
- Establishing an anti-idling policy for City vehicles in 2010 to improve air quality and reduce GHG emissions;
- Adopting a Climate Action Plan in 2011 to guide the City's efforts in reducing GHG emissions;
- Working with the Oberlin Project to build a prosperous post-fossil fuel based local economy ;
- Transitioning the City's power portfolio from fossil-fuel based resources to carbon-

neutral resources;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Oberlin, County of Lorain, State of Ohio, five-sevenths (5/7ths) of all members elected thereto concurring:

SECTION 1. That climate change is not an abstract problem for the future or one that will only affect far-distant places but rather climate change is happening now, we are causing it, and the longer we wait to act, the more we lose and the more difficult the problem will be to solve.

SECTION 2. That we, the Oberlin City Council, on behalf of the residents of Oberlin, do hereby urge the administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, Lisa P. Jackson, and President Barack Obama to move swiftly to fully employ and enforce the Clean Air Act to do our part to reduce carbon in our atmosphere to no more than 350 parts per million.


SECTION 3. It is found and determined that all formal actions of this Council concerning or relating to the adoption of this Resolution were adopted in an open meeting of this Council and that all deliberations of this Council and of any of its committees that resulted in such formal action, were in meetings open to the public in compliance with all legal requirements, including Section 121.22 of the Ohio Revised Code.


SECTION 4. That this Resolution is hereby declared to be an emergency measure necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health and safety of the citizens of the City of Oberlin, or to provide for the usual daily operation of a municipal department, to wit:

“to authorize a resolution indicating the opinion of Oberlin City Council on a matter of great importance to the citizens of the municipality in a timely manner”, and shall take effect immediately upon passage.

PASSED: 1st Reading - February 21, 2012 (S, E)
2nd Reading -
3rd Reading -

ATTEST:


BELINDA B. ANDERSON, CMC
CLERK OF COUNCIL


RONNIE J. RIMBERT
PRESIDENT OF COUNCIL

POSTED: 02/22/2012

EFFECTIVE DATE: 02/21/2012