

**RESOLUTION BY THE WAKE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Supporting A COUNTY, STATE, AND NATIONAL GOAL OF 100%
CLEAN ENERGY BY 2050 AND THE CREATION OF GREEN JOBS**

WHEREAS, by the end of 2015, the Earth's average surface temperature has increased by about 1.0 degree Celsius (1.8 degrees Fahrenheit) since the late-19th century according to NASA;

WHEREAS, climate change is expected to increasingly impact North Carolina's temperatures, precipitation and sea level with harmful consequences in coming years;

WHEREAS, if unchecked, climate change will fundamentally undermine the stability of human societies and natural systems;

WHEREAS, climate change and global average temperature increases are primarily due to human-caused fossil fuels emissions, including coal, oil and natural gas, according to the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, National Academy of Sciences, American Meteorological Society, United States Environmental Protection Agency, United States Department of Defense, and numerous other leading scientific, academic and governmental authorities both in the United States and internationally;

WHEREAS, there is no credible path to a safe climate that includes new fossil fuel infrastructure;

WHEREAS, Wake County has a responsibility to its residents, our country, and the world, to accelerate the transition to 100% clean, renewable energy and oppose new fossil fuel infrastructure;

WHEREAS, a final agreement of the United Nations Conference of Parties (COP21), which included the United States and a total of 195 nations, was reached in Paris, France on December 12, 2015, that states the aim is to "holding the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2 degrees Celsius above preindustrial levels and pursuing efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius above preindustrial levels" and entered into force on November 4, 2016;

WHEREAS, scientists have concluded the concentration of carbon dioxide, the leading greenhouse gas, in the Earth's atmosphere is currently and consistently over 400 parts per million (ppm) and will likely stay above this level for the indefinite future for the first time in millions of years;

WHEREAS, sixteen of the seventeen hottest years on record have occurred in the twenty-first century and 2016 is the hottest year on record;

WHEREAS, an increase in the global average temperature is having and will continue to increasingly have major adverse impacts, if not stopped by eliminating the use of fossil fuels, on both the natural and human-made environments due to longer, more intense heat waves,

prolonged droughts, spread of infectious diseases, rising sea levels, ocean acidification, wildfires, and more intense and frequent extreme weather events;

WHEREAS, these physical effects are expected to lead to water scarcity, food insecurity, increasing numbers of refugees, increased poverty, and the mass extinction of species;

WHEREAS, studies completed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Risky Business Project, Duke University, and others point to the severe economic costs of climate change and continuing use of fossil fuel, estimating billions of dollars a year in costs nationally and trillions globally;

WHEREAS, leading economists, policy experts, and business leaders conclude that transitioning to a clean energy economy available for all would create millions of green jobs nationally, improve health and living standards, and boost economic growth in coming years;

WHEREAS, low-income communities and communities of color in North Carolina and the United States are inordinately exposed to pollution, that causes serious health problems such as cancer and asthma, from fossil fuels, including the dirtiest coal-fired power plants which produce coal ash, and need to be empowered and have access to educational tools and an awareness of climate issues;

WHEREAS, a just transition to 100% renewable energy can benefit low-income communities and communities of color that are disproportionately impacted by fossil fuel pollution;

WHEREAS, a just transition to 100% renewable energy can bring underserved communities, including those hardest hit by climate change, into the political process to develop more just, equitable, and sustainable energy systems;

WHEREAS, a just transition to 100% renewable energy can facilitate more democratic control and public ownership of energy systems, and more just and equal relationships with indigenous communities and tribal governments;

WHEREAS, a Stanford University and University of California-Berkeley study concludes the United States energy supply could be based entirely on renewable energy by the year 2050 using current technologies and 80% renewable energy by 2030 while creating numerous green jobs;

WHEREAS, municipalities, organizations, businesses, and academic institutions throughout the world have set a goal to achieve carbon or climate neutrality by 2050 or earlier;

WHEREAS, the United States Conference of Mayors in 2017 passed a resolution supporting 100% clean renewable energy community-wide for cities by 2035;

WHEREAS, the following North Carolina municipalities passed resolutions supporting a goal of 100 percent renewable energy for all energy sectors by 2050 for the State of North Carolina and the United States: Town of Boone; Watauga County; Town of Sylva; City of

Asheville, Town of Webster; Chatham County, Town of Canton, Macon County, Town of Franklin, Town of Waynesville, Town of Clyde, Orange County, and the Town of Hillsborough;

WHEREAS, nearly 40 American municipalities outside North Carolina have committed to some version of a goal of 100% renewable energy including Atlanta, St. Petersburg, Las Vegas, Sarasota, Pittsburgh, San Francisco, Portland, OR, San Diego, Salt Lake City, Seattle, Honolulu, Santa Barbara, San Jose, Aspen, Burlington, VT, Ithaca, NY, Greensburg, KS, Lancaster, CA, Palo Alto, CA, Rochester, MN, East Hampton, NY, Columbia, MD, Moab, UT, Edmonds, WA and others;

WHEREAS, over 600 American colleges and universities have made a commitment to reduce greenhouse gases, including Appalachian State University, Blue Ridge Community College, Carteret Community College, Catawba College, Central Carolina Community College, Davidson College, Duke University, Elizabeth City State University, Fayetteville State University, Guilford College, North Carolina Central University, Queens University of Charlotte, Southeastern Community College, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina at Charlotte, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, University of North Carolina at Pembroke, Wake Technical Community College, and Warren Wilson College;

WHEREAS, North Carolina installed 1,140 MW of solar electric capacity in 2015, ranking it second nationally; nearly \$1.7 billion was invested on solar installations in North Carolina, a 159% increase over the previous year; there are currently more than 200 solar companies at work throughout the value chain in North Carolina, the state companies employing some 6,000 people; North Carolina ranks third in the nation in installed solar capacity, enough to power 260,000 homes; and solar photovoltaic system prices in the U.S. have dropped by 66% since 2010;

WHEREAS, a just transition to 100% renewable energy will create millions of high-quality, family-sustaining jobs;

WHEREAS, addressing the impacts of a changing climate will require major forest protection and restoration efforts focused on leaving significantly more forests across the planet standing, including in the Southeast US, which has some of the highest logging rates in the world and;

WHEREAS, the industrial scale use of forests for fuel is not a carbon neutral form of energy, and will contribute to the rate of climate change and severity of its impacts,

WHEREAS, North Carolina has more offshore wind energy potential than any other Atlantic state;

WHEREAS, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Fifth Assessment Report recommended a global goal of achieving near zero greenhouse gas emissions or below, which is necessary to stabilize the global average temperature to avoid climate catastrophe;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Wake County Board of Commissioners that it endorses the following:

Wake County, the State of North Carolina, and the United States shall establish a transition from fossil fuels to 100% clean renewable energy for all energy sectors by 2050 or sooner and 80% clean renewable energy for all energy sectors by 2030 to avoid climate catastrophe, to promote job creation and economic growth, and to protect the Earth for current and future generations from climate catastrophe.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Wake County will actively oppose infrastructure whose primary purpose is transporting or storing fossil fuels in or through Wake County or adjacent waterways.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Wake County will support a community-wide goal of 100% clean renewable energy as soon as possible, establishing sector-by-sector targets within the next year.

This resolution is effective upon adoption.

1.26.18