

RESOLUTION NO. 024-19-15296

A Resolution of the Mayor and City Commission of the City of South Miami, Florida, urging our U.S. Senators and Representatives to pass the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act (H.R. 763) to levy an annually increasing revenue-neutral fee on the carbon in fossil fuels at the point of production or importation and return a dividend to all Americans.

WHEREAS, climate scientists worldwide agree that Earth is warming rapidly to a degree that is perilous to human civilization, numerous species, and to the global ecosystem; and

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

WHEREAS, the United States Global Change Research Program, anticipates that inaction on reducing global emissions of CO₂ will lead to increased heat, drought, insect outbreaks, flooding and wildfires coupled with declining water supplies, reduced agricultural yields, and harm to public health and welfare throughout the United States; and

WHEREAS, the likely consequences of unmitigated climate change on South Florida will pose serious threats to the region's economy, ecology, and livability through sea level rise, the loss of our freshwater supply, compromised sanitation systems, stronger storms, rising insurance rates, etc.; and

WHEREAS, local sea level rise in South Florida, including the City of South Miami, has greatly exceeded global sea level rise. Since 2010, Miami has seen an extra 5" of sea level rise¹; and

WHEREAS, every additional release of greenhouse gas increases the severity of climate change; and

WHEREAS, the City Commission of the City of South Miami has a record of acknowledging the reality of climate change, the projected effects on the community, and the City's ability and responsibility to reduce its contribution to the causes of climate change, as evidenced by the City's 2009 commitment to 100% renewable energy; and

WHEREAS, coastal areas of the United States are experience indirect harm based on economic factors relating to rising flood insurance costs and loss of 30-year mortgage issuance

¹ Dessu SB, Price RM, Troxler TG, Kominoski JS (2018) Effects of sea-level rise and freshwater management on long-term water levels and water quality in the Florida Coastal Everglades. Journal of Environmental Management, 21, 164-176. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jenvman.2018.01.025>

in low-lying areas. FEMA flood insurance rates have already begun to rise for the many properties in the City of South Miami; and

WHEREAS, an unseen side-effect of the underwater battle being waged between freshwater and saltwater has been the rise of the local water table and contamination of the freshwater supply for south Florida²; and

WHEREAS, national and international policies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions must be implemented rapidly to avoid catastrophic damage to the planet's ecosystems upon which we and all life depend; and

WHEREAS, local action is necessary yet insufficient to avoid catastrophic climate change³; and

WHEREAS, a policy known as the "**carbon fee and dividend**" is a superior, revenue-neutral, economically efficient, market-based mechanism to reduce greenhouse gas emissions across the economy while providing a direct economic benefit to the people of the United States; and

WHEREAS, a Carbon Fee and Dividend has been proposed in bipartisan bills drafted by members of the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate, as a revenue-neutral policy; and

WHEREAS, a Carbon Fee and Dividend rule would encourage consumers and the market to transition to clean energy sources and away from carbon-based energy and fuels.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF SOUTH MIAMI, FLORIDA, THAT:

Section 1. The City Commission hereby recognizes that the pollution caused by burning fossil fuels is a primary cause of climate change, and that an effective and efficient measure to address this problem is the enactment of a revenue-neutral fee on carbon production at its source, with the fees being returned to Americans as a dividend.

Section 2. The City Commission strongly urges the U.S House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate to pass the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act, legislation that

² In 2015, GEI Consultants, Inc. identified septic systems as the infrastructure in the City of South Miami at most immediate risk from the rising water table: "The Snapper Creek Study Area had 11 properties (or 73% of the 15 records available) that were estimated to have the bottom of drainfield reached by rising groundwater within the next 25 years." When groundwater reaches the level of a house's septic drainfield, wastewater from the house (including the toilets) will backflow into the bathtub instead of the septic tank and will further contaminate south Florida's freshwater supply with saltwater.

³ While there are still those who deny that human activity contributes to climate change, they fail to ask themselves: What will happen if they are wrong and it is too late to reverse climate change?

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 reduce U.S. greenhouse gas emissions to climate-safe levels by 2050, with the fees returned to Americans as a dividend.

Section 3. The City Clerk is directed to forward a copy of this resolution to U.S. Senators Marco Rubio and Rick Scott, and all members of the U.S. House of Representatives and members of the U.S. Senate representing Florida districts.

Section 4. If any section, clause, sentence, or phrase of this resolution is for any reason held invalid or unconstitutional by a court of competent jurisdiction, the holding shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this resolution.

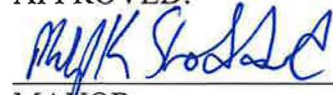
Section 5. This resolution shall take effect immediately upon adoption.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this 26th day of February, 2019.

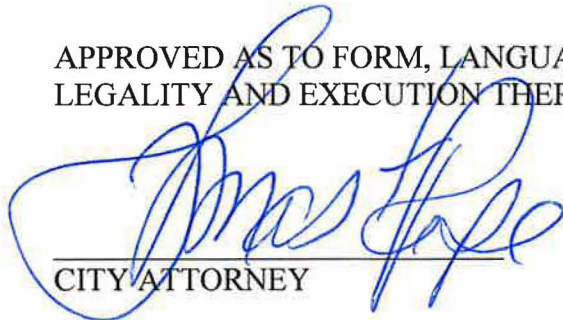
ATTEST:


CITY CLERK

APPROVED:


MAYOR

APPROVED AS TO FORM, LANGUAGE,
LEGALITY AND EXECUTION THEREOF:


CITY ATTORNEY

COMMISSION VOTE:	5-0
Mayor Stoddard:	Yea
Vice Mayor Harris:	Yea
Commissioner Gil:	Yea
Commissioner Liebman:	Yea
Commissioner Welsh:	Yea

City Commission Agenda Item Report

Meeting Date: February 26, 2019

Submitted by: Thomas Pepe

Submitting Department: City Attorney

Item Type: Resolution

Agenda Section:

Subject:

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Suggested Action:

Attachments:

Carbon Fee & Dividend reso v3.docx