RESOLUTION NO. 2020-280

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF BROWARD COUNTY, FLORIDA, URGING THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS TO ENACT HOUSE RESOLUTION 763, THE ENERGY INNOVATION AND CARBON DIVIDEND ACT OF 2019; PROVIDING FOR DISTRIBUTION OF THE RESOLUTION; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

(Sponsored by Mayor Dale V.C. Holness, Commissioner Beam Furr, Senator Nan H. Rich and Commissioner Lamar P. Fisher)

WHEREAS, according to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change ("IPCC"), the United Nations scientific body dedicated to the study of global climate change, the Earth has warmed approximately 1.0 degree Celsius (°C) above preindustrial levels;

WHEREAS, at this level of warming, the Earth is already experiencing the effects of climate change, including greater frequency of extreme heat waves, extreme precipitation events, increased coastal flooding, more intense tropical storms, greater frequency and severity of coral bleaching events, higher average land and ocean temperatures, and increased ocean acidity;

WHEREAS, Broward County is particularly vulnerable to the effects of global climate change, especially sea level rise and associated impacts, given its low elevation, porous geology, and exposure to tropical storms;

WHEREAS, the IPCC released a Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C ("IPCC Report") in October 2018, outlining the importance of limiting the total global temperature increase to 1.5°C in order to reduce the severity of climate impacts, including extreme hot days, higher risk of drought in certain regions, higher amounts of heavy precipitation from tropical cyclones, sea level rise, extinction threats to many plant and
animal species, ecosystem change, loss of coral reefs, ocean heating, higher risk of lower economic growth, and other significant climatic, environmental, social, and economic disruptions;

WHEREAS, according to the IPCC Report, limiting warming to no more than 1.5°C will at least preserve a semblance of the ecosystems we have, while warming above 2°C is likely to have devastating consequences for the natural world and human societies;

WHEREAS, in order to limit warming to 1.5°C or to only briefly overshoot this goal, the climate model scenarios discussed in the IPCC Report require artificially-created net carbon dioxide ("CO₂") emissions to decline by about forty-five percent (45%) from 2010 levels by 2030, and to reach net zero around 2050;

WHEREAS, the United States ("U.S.") is a major carbon pollution emitter, currently responsible for over 10 percent (10%) of global carbon emissions, despite having only four percent (4%) of the world's population, and it is cumulatively responsible for approximately twenty-five percent (25%) of all carbon emissions since 1800;

WHEREAS, the United States has a responsibility to reduce its carbon emissions in line with the reductions suggested in the IPCC Report;

WHEREAS, these dramatic reductions in CO₂ emissions need to occur on an economywide scale;

WHEREAS, the Broward County Climate Change Action Plan (2015) aims for a countywide reduction of greenhouse gas emissions of eighty percent (80%) below 2005 levels by the year 2050, similar to the required emissions reductions outlined in the IPCC Report;

WHEREAS, scenario forecasting conducted as a part of Broward County's 2011-2014 Communitywide Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory suggested that
Broward County might be able to achieve half of the eighty percent (80%) countywide target through local policies and programs, with state and national policies needed to achieve the other half;

WHEREAS, while Broward County can pursue local action, the U.S. Congress has the responsibility and ability to enact legislation to reduce carbon emissions on a national, economywide scale;

WHEREAS, the environmental, health, and social costs of carbon emissions are not included in prices paid for fossil fuels but, rather, these externalized costs are borne directly and indirectly by all Americans and inhabitants of the planet;

WHEREAS, some economists encourage placing a price on negative externalities such as carbon pollution, because such pricing signals are technology-neutral and cost-efficient, thus leading to maximizing reductions of the unwanted externalities at the lowest economic cost;

WHEREAS, federal legislators from both parties have recognized the need for dramatic, national, economywide action to reduce carbon emissions and respond to climate impacts by introducing resolutions such as the "Green New Deal" resolution introduced by Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, D-NY, and Senator Ed Markey, D-MA, and the "Green Real Deal" resolution proposed by Rep. Matt Gaetz, R-FL;

WHEREAS, members of the U.S. House of Representatives have introduced House Resolution 763 ("H.R. 763"), the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act of 2019, to apply a national carbon fee on fossil fuels based on the amount of carbon dioxide each fuel emits when burned and to allocate the proceeds to all households in the United States in equal shares in the form of a monthly dividend;
WHEREAS, H.R. 763 would establish a national, revenue-neutral carbon fee of fifteen dollars ($15.00) per ton of carbon dioxide equivalent emissions, to be increased by at least ten dollars ($10.00) per ton of carbon dioxide equivalent emissions each year; WHEREAS, H.R. 763 seeks to protect low and middle income persons from the economic impact of rising prices due to the carbon fee by providing equal monthly per-person dividend payments to all American households (with half-payments per child under 19 years old) from the fees collected, less minor administration costs, with the total value of all monthly dividend payments representing one hundred percent (100%) of the net carbon fees collected per month; WHEREAS, after twelve (12) years, H.R. 763 is projected to decrease U.S. carbon dioxide emissions by forty percent (40%) and increase national employment by 2.1 million jobs; WHEREAS, border adjustments, carbon content-based tariffs on products imported from countries without comparable carbon pricing, and refunds to American exporters of carbon fees paid in the U.S. can maintain the competitiveness of U.S. businesses in global markets; WHEREAS, a national carbon fee can be implemented quickly and efficiently because the federal government already possesses mechanisms needed to implement and enforce the fee, such as the existing procedures for collecting fees from fossil fuel producers and importers, and to distribute revenues, such as via the Internal Revenue Service; and WHEREAS, a national revenue-neutral carbon fee would make the United States a leader in reducing carbon emissions, position the nation to rapidly develop a clean
energy economy, and set an example for other countries to enact similar carbon fees,

NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED, BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF

BROWARD COUNTY, FLORIDA:

Section 1. Broward County urges the United States Congress to enact House

Resolution 763, the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act of 2019, or similar

legislation.

Section 2. Copies of this Resolution shall be distributed to all members of the

United States House of Representatives and United States Senate from the state of

Florida.

Section 3. Effective Date.

This Resolution is effective upon adoption.

ADOPTED this 19th day of May, 2020. (Item 20)

Approved as to form and legal sufficiency:
Andrew J. Meyers, County Attorney

By /s/ Michael C. Owens 04/27/2020
Michael C. Owens (date)
Senior Assistant County Attorney

By /s/ Maite Azcoitia 04/27/2020
Maite Azcoitia (date)
Deputy County Attorney