

RESOLUTION 2017-14

A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF FERGUSON, CENTRE COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA COMMITTING THE TOWNSHIP TO DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING A STRATEGY TO ACHIEVE NET ZERO GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS NO LATER THAN 2050; TO BECOME A LEADER IN THE REGION AND COMMONWEALTH IN PURSUING GOALS ESTABLISHED BY SAID STRATEGY; AND TO ENGAGE OTHER STAKEHOLDERS IN A DIALOGUE TO DEVELOP COURSES OF ACTION TO REDUCE THE IMPACT OF HUMAN-INDUCED CLIMATE CHANGE TO PENNSYLVANIA AND PEOPLE AND PLACES AROUND THE WORLD.

WHEREAS, the 21st Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Paris agreed to hold the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels, and to pursue efforts to limit the increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels in order to prevent catastrophic harm to people and ecological systems on which life depends; and

WHEREAS, the United Nations Environment Program's 2016 "Bridge the Gap Report" concluded that, in order to have a 50% chance of limiting warming to 1.5°C, global carbon dioxide emissions from all nations must be net zero between 2045 and 2050, and to have a 66% chance of limiting warming to 2°C, carbon dioxide emissions from all sources must be net zero between 2060 and 2075. Moreover, to achieve these warming limits, many of the scenarios in the relevant literature that successfully limit warming to below 2°C assume that the use of negative emissions technologies is necessary; and

WHEREAS, both the magnitude and speed needed to achieve these reductions necessary to prevent dangerous human-induced warming urgently requires all local government entities to cooperate with other levels of government, the private sector, educational institutions, agriculture, and others to rapidly develop strategies to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to net zero to achieve the Paris Agreement's warming limit goals; and

WHEREAS, any delay in reducing GHG emissions makes the Paris Agreement's warming limit goals much more difficult, if not impossible to achieve, as existing GHG emissions levels are rapidly reducing the shrinking carbon budgets that must constrain total global GHG emissions to achieve said goals; and

WHEREAS, a growing number of local government entities and private and public sector organizations around the world have committed to begin planning to reduce their GHG emissions to net zero as quickly as possible but no later than 2050 or, at minimum, achieve 100% non-fossil fuel generated electricity by that date; and

WHEREAS, the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Article 1, Section 27 guarantees that, "The people have a right to clean air, pure water, and to the preservation of natural, scenic, historic, and esthetic values of the environment. Pennsylvania's public natural resources are the common property of all the people, including generations yet to come. As trustees of these resources, the Commonwealth shall conserve and maintain them for the benefit of all the people;" and

WHEREAS, Pennsylvania contributes approximately 1% of global GHG emissions, which, according to the Commonwealth's Third Pennsylvania Climate Impacts Assessment Report, is affecting agriculture, energy, human health, infrastructure, recreation, water quality, forests, and other ecosystems in Pennsylvania, and human health and ecological systems around the world. Despite this, neither the Pennsylvania state government nor the clear majority of Pennsylvania local governments have established a GHG emissions strategy designed to achieve a GHG reduction target consistent with the urgent need to prevent very dangerous climate change; and

WHEREAS, green building practices and standards have been established, and the cost of non-fossil fuel generated energy including solar wind and geothermal power have fallen to the point that the

replacement of fossil-fuel generated energy with renewable energy is reaching price parity with non-renewable energy; and

WHEREAS, green building and renewable energy industries employ thousands of Pennsylvanians; and

WHEREAS, agriculture and forestry have played important roles in Ferguson Township's economy and culture for generations, and are integral in sinking carbon, providing additional ecosystem services, beauty, and recreation, as well as afford a high quality of life for people and our environment; and

WHEREAS, universities in Pennsylvania, including Penn State University provide jobs that research, support, and educate Pennsylvania's renewable energy industry and conduct international, national, state-level, and local climate assessments and planning assistance; and

WHEREAS, the Township of Ferguson is a Home Rule Municipality whose governing Charter includes a Community and Environmental Bill of Rights guaranteeing a sustainable energy future.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HERE RESOLVED:

1. The Township of Ferguson shall a) Immediately begin to develop a strategy to achieve net zero GHG emissions as quickly as feasible, but no later than 2050, and b) commit to achieving the GHG emissions reductions target determined by said strategy and by the date identified therein; and
2. Lead by example to rapidly pursue these goals in a manner that is transparent, fair, and economically responsible; and
3. Engage peer governments, non-governmental organizations, businesses, and universities to raise awareness and identify courses of action to reduce the impacts and embrace the opportunities created by human-induced warming to Pennsylvania and places around the world.

RESOLVED this 19th day of June, 2017.

**FERGUSON TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

By: 
Steve Miller, Chairman
Board of Supervisors

[S E A L]

ATTEST:



David G. Pribulka, Secretary