



CITY OF EASTHAMPTON
OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL

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EASTHAMPTON CITY COUNCIL
RESOLUTION DECLARING A CLIMATE EMERGENCY

WHEREAS, In a world facing the extreme challenges of rapid climate change, Easthampton residents understand the importance of protecting the Earth and its inhabitants; can envision a better, sustainable future; and can create and execute bold plans for a prosperous economy and a thriving community; and

WHEREAS, progress toward this future is underway in Massachusetts, which is among national leaders on climate initiatives with over 100,000 jobs in the state's clean energy sector and named a top energy efficient state for the past decade by the American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy; and

WHEREAS, national security experts agree that climate emergency is a threat multiplier contributing to the Earth's 6th mass extinction of species; and the present level of global warming has triggered catastrophic changes to the Earth's system, including increased wildfires, heat waves, droughts, flash floods, rising seas, and extreme weather; and continued global warming would further intensify the melting of the glaciers, polar ice sheet collapse, accelerating sea level rise, superstorms, hurricanes, mosquito-borne diseases, water and food shortages, and civil unrest; and

WHEREAS, Easthampton has an engaged City government and has undertaken a number of important steps on climate and the environment, (such as the Easthampton closed landfill solar project and green community designation), such that the City is well placed to implement the critical transition away from fossil fuels and to advance a robust, carbon-free, equitable economy and the improved health and quality of life that will result; and

WHEREAS, on April 22, 2016, world leaders from 175 countries recognized the threat of climate change and the urgent need to combat it by signing the Paris Agreement, agreeing to keep warming "well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels" and to "pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C"; and

WHEREAS, marginalized populations in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and worldwide, including people of color, immigrants, indigenous communities, low-income individuals, people with disabilities, and the unhoused are already disproportionately affected by climate change, and will continue to bear an excessive burden as temperatures increase, oceans rise, and natural disasters worsen; and

WHEREAS, nearly 400 cities, districts and counties across the world collectively representing over 34 million people have recently declared or officially acknowledged the existence of a global Climate Emergency, including over 20 Massachusetts cities and towns such as Boston, Lexington, Acton, and 11 towns on Cape Cod; and

WHEREAS, declaring the climate crisis as an emergency is a crucial first step for aligning residents around the urgency of the global climate breakdown; and

WHEREAS, building a society that is resilient to the current, expected, and scientifically predicted effects of Climate Change will protect health, lives, ecosystems, and economies, and such resilience efforts will have the greatest positive impact if the most dramatic potential consequences of Climate Change are taken into account; and

WHEREAS, declaring that the climate crisis is an emergency demonstrates that our government agencies acknowledge that addressing climate change will require an emergency response at emergency speed; and

WHEREAS, the crisis caused by climate change also presents a major opportunity to invest in healthy energy, transportation, land-use, and agriculture systems that will deliver both immediate and sustained benefits to all and reduce future risks from climate change;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the City of Easthampton declares that a Climate & Ecological Emergency threatens our city, state, region, nation, civilization, humanity, and the natural world;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Council of Easthampton affirms that human activity caused the climate crisis and that over use of fossil fuels and the lack of understanding of the other fundamental causes of climate change are the primary cause;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Council of Easthampton hereby declares that a Climate Emergency threatens our city and humanity broadly, and that a mobilization to meet this challenge is both a moral imperative and an unprecedented opportunity to stabilize the climate, remedy environmental harms, create clean-energy jobs, and improve human lives.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the members of the Easthampton City Council call on City government and staff and all Easthampton civic groups, businesses, and residents to commit to a climate mobilization effort to bring net City-wide attention to all the efforts needed to reach a sustainable course for the City of Easthampton, including reaching net zero emissions, protecting natural habitat and open space, minimizing the waste stream, moving away from fossil fuels and the impact of diet and food choices on the climate.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, in furtherance of this resolution, the clerk of the Easthampton City Council send a copy of this resolution to State Representative Dan Carey, State Senator John Velis, Congressman Richard Neal and request that all possible support and assistance in effectuating this resolution be provided.

Approved this 22nd day of September, 2021.

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CITY COUNCIL, EASTHAMPTON, MASSACHUSETTS