



# NORTHAMPTON ENERGY AND SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION

## APPROVED MINUTES

January 28, 2021  
4:00 PM – 6:00 PM

**Location:** Virtual meeting

---

**Members present:** Wayne Feiden, Chair, Alex Jarrett, Rachel Maiore, Adin Maynard, Gordon Meadows, Ashley Muspratt, Richard Parasiliti, Tim Smith, Ben Weil, and Chris Mason (non-voting).

Wayne Feiden opened the meeting and announced that the meeting was being recorded.

**Public comment period:** Jenny Fleming Ives, affiliated with Northampton City Lights, spoke on her concern on the health effects of artificial light. Myla Cabot-Zinn seconded Jenny's comments on potential negative health effects and added concerns of artificial light's negative effects on wildlife and a diminished ability to see stars. She pointed out that controlling and limiting artificial light would help the city meet environmental and human health goals identified in the Climate Resilience and Regeneration Plan (CRRP). Chris Mason read comments emailed to him from Janet Gross requesting that the Energy and Sustainability Commission endorse the International Dark Sky Association/Illuminating Engineering Society's "Five Principles" of Responsible Outdoor Lighting.

**Review/approve minutes of 12/22/20 meetings:** Alex Jarrett moved and Ashley Muspratt seconded a motion to approve the minutes of 12/22/20 meetings. - Motion passed unanimously.

**Cooler Communities Education Program Overview:** (see attached one-page overview) Mary Jane Eustace, Cooler Communities Community Liaison for Ener-G-save, provided the commission with a brief introduction of Cooler Communities program activities in Northampton's schools. Activities typically culminate in a public fair where students display projects on energy, climate and conservation and ask visitors to pledge actions that reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. Activities in Northampton's schools have, unfortunately, been postponed until the next school year due to the virus. They are currently planning to resume activities in the '21-'22 school year and are aiming to hold a fair in the spring (April – May) of 2022. Cooler Communities works with partner organizations such as the Center for Ecotechnology (CET), which is working with Northampton middle school teachers, who would love to include student projects that are focused on current community issues. Such projects, which must meet school & education standards, might include purchasing green electricity, publishing student-written PSAs, seeking pledges for person actions or advancing CRRP projects and pledges. MJ asked the commissioners to send her ideas on potential partnering organizations and mentioned Tim Smith and SVAHS as an example. She also encouraged commissioners to consider volunteering or getting involved in some way.

**Climate Resilience and Regeneration Plan:** Wayne reported that he will be presenting on the CRRP at a **Planning Board Public Hearing** later that evening and stepped through his presentation slides. (see attached). He will emphasize that we are planning for this to be a living document with an ongoing effort to keep it current as it takes far less time to do so than to re-write the entire thing every ten years.

---

**Voting Members:** Wayne Feiden, Chair • David Pomerantz, Vice Chair • Jonathan Flagg • Alex Jarrett • Rachel Maiore • Adin Maynard • Gordon Meadows • Ashley Muspratt • Richard Parasiliti • Tim Smith • Ben Weil

**Staff advisor, non voting:** Chris Mason

The CRRP will ultimately be integrated into the Sustainable Northampton Plan. A typo in the slides was identified: it should state a goal of reducing GHG emissions by 75% by 2040. **Discussion** – Gordon: how far along are we in detailed planning for each section? Wayne: that is wide ranging. Chris: Asked Denise Lello (in audience) if Smith College students might be able to help with specific areas of the CRRP. Wayne/Denise: Yes, and Wayne provided an example of Ashley developing an appendix on CO2 sequestration. Gordon: changing how people heat homes is not a municipal function. That won't change until the economics drive it. Ben: Benchmarking seems to be the most actionable item for a city council ordinance right now. Alex asked if Wayne and/or Chris can help draft such an ordinance. Wayne: it is important to look for the most cost-effective and “political capital-effective” measures to start with. *What is effective was suggested as an agenda item for the February meeting.* Ben: Can NESC be tasked with helping City Council develop ordinances, e.g., a new lighting ordinance around the 5 responsible outdoor lighting principles to be discussed later in the meeting? Wayne: there are many pathways to advance the CRRP, including actions by city departments, City Council, Planning Board, Mayoral. Aim for most impact and/or broadest impact. Alex: it could be very helpful for City Council to be working with others, e.g. paid staff. Gordon: The city is looking at what to do with some environmentally damaged land (golf course). Clean power such as PV should be on top of the priority list. Wayne: the **CRRP will add appendices** to detail actions, e.g., Ashley is helping to develop an appendix on CO2 sequestration. Ashley: This will be based on past research and include a decision analysis and highlight best practices. Wayne: Planning is open to filling gaps through additional appendices. There is \$15,000 of CRRP money left over. **What are the information gaps** that we could use this money to help fill? Ashley: helping departments track carbon budgets. Ben: we need a better handle on how to track the volume of transportation fuels used within city boundaries. Gordon: sees transportation fuels as being taken care of by the market but agrees that federal government action does influence the market.

**Endorsement of the 5 Responsible Outdoor Lighting Principles:** Alex introduced James Lowenthal who asked the commission to endorse the five responsible outdoor lighting principles recently adopted by the boards of the International Dark-Sky Association (IDA) and the Illuminating Engineering Society (IES). The five principals are:

1. All light should have a clear purpose.
2. Light should be directed only to where needed.
3. Light should be no brighter than necessary.
4. Light should be used only when it is useful.

Use warmer color lights where possible.

James cited a UN report (<https://www.iau.org/news/announcements/detail/ann21002/>) that describes evidence of calamities brewing due to increasing light pollution. He asked commissioners what the best way would be for the city to help with this issue. What would be the best path to take to have the city adopt these principals.

**Discussion** – Rachel: we could update the city's lighting ordinance. Wayne: This can be addressed in zoning, which would be easy but have limited impact. We need to ask what resources we can bring to bear, how do we police compliance? Rachel: an information campaign? Ben: Similar to needing city approval to take down trees? Rich: the city has no say on taking down trees on private property. Gordon: Did the City's change in streetlights meet these principals. Chris: all streetlights were full cutoff, at lowest color temp economically available at the time, allowed for residents to request shields, and the vast majority of the lights were installed at the minimum light output setting. Alex: let's move to endorse the five principles and bring this back for a more detailed discussion of actions at another meeting. Rachel: moved that the NESC endorse the five responsible outdoor lighting principles as previously described. Alex seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

**Biomass Energy Qualifying for AECs:** Wayne reported that, as requested, he had sent in a letter on the NESC's behalf to the legislature's Joint Committee on Telecommunications, Utilities and Energy (TUE) requesting that the TUE reject the DOER's proposed changes to the climate bill that would lower the standard on how biomass systems can qualify as a renewable energy source for the purpose of receiving energy credits. Adele Franks was asked to give the commission an update on this topic. Adele: the TUE pushed back on the DOER and declined to incorporate their suggested changes into the climate bill. When the TUE reforms in the new legislative session, we should expect the DOER to resubmit.

**State Level Advocacy - Baker Administration & Legislators:** Chris reported that the TUE passed the climate bill out of committee and that the full legislature passed the bill and sent it to the governor, who pocket vetoed the bill and published a statement on why. (see attached) The new legislature has already re-passed the same climate bill and sent it back to the governor. Chris asked, does the NESC wish to engage in further communication with the state on this matter? And suggested sending a letter based on a draft produced by MCAN. MCAN had ensured him that their draft letter didn't ask for any changes to the climate bill as passed. It just says to hold firm on aspects of the bill that the governor was likely to push back on. Alex: isn't it true that the legislature has a veto-proof majority so they could pass the climate bill as-is if the Governor vetoes the bill for a second time? Adele: It is expected that the Governor will go back to the legislature with proposed changes to the climate bill instead of vetoing it again outright. Ashley: one of the most substantial changes the governor mentioned in his statement is to lower the 2030 goal from 50% GHG reductions to 45%. Ben: An economic analysis of this change shows that the cost difference from getting to 50% from 45% is 1.5%. Chris read the bulleted list in the draft MCAN letter urging that the climate bill:

- Codifies the definition of Environmental Justice. It's crucial that Environmental Justice communities are recognized and protected as part of a statewide climate solution.
- Directs the Department of Energy Resources to develop a Net Zero building code and adds 4 energy efficiency seats to the Board of Building Regulations and Standards. This will give towns and cities across the Commonwealth the option to require a Net Zero standard for all new construction.
- Require investor-owned utilities to take climate into account when determining the cost-effectiveness of their programs.
- Ensure that biomass is removed as a source of non-emitting energy that Municipal Light Plants can burn.

Ashley requested that any letter from the NESC include a request to hold to the 50% by 2030 goal. Ben moved and Ashley seconded a motion to have Chris draft a letter on the commission's behalf urging that these aspects of the climate bill be maintained and to send such a letter to state legislators and the governor. Motion passed unanimously.

**State Level Advocacy - Clean Energy Climate Plan 2030:** Chris announced that the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs is now seeking public comment on the Interim Clean Energy and Climate Plan for 2030. Comments can be submitted through Feb 22, 2021, which means that the NESC could not organize a shared response unless they chose to meet earlier than scheduled. But individuals may wish to review and comment on the interim plan. Comments can be submitted at: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/massachusetts-clean-energy-and-climate-plan-for-2030>.

**State Level Advocacy - Energy Efficiency Advisory Council:** Chris suggested that the commission may want to consider sending in comments on the utility energy efficiency programs three-year plans, which are developed in collaboration with the EEAC.

**Commissioner's Reports:** Ashley's work on CO2 sequestration was reported on earlier. Alex & Wayne reported on the 2-unit by-right zoning change. The Planning Board adding back in a requirement that all projects taking advantage of the increased density allowed by this change will have to seek site plan

approval. This was done so as to err on the side of caution after a similar, but not exactly the same, situation in Brookline MA said a site plan review would be needed.

**Ongoing City Department Projects Status:** Planning Dept: CRRP is to go before the Planning Board. Open space parcel closings are approaching. Restoration of the ice pond may get funding – N’ton is in line if more funding becomes available. Pedestrian friendly improvements will be happening near Bridge St School, from Hockanum Rd to the roundabout, and to sidewalks in Florence center.

Energy Office: C&H have completed walkthroughs of all buildings and are now monitoring daily gas usage and indoor versus outdoor temperatures and taking IR images to fine-tune energy models. We expect a first draft of feasibility studies in early March with one building used as an example of a more finalized and detailed report. The city is applying for EVSE grants through DEP to fund several Level 2 chargers (still working out exact locations) and have asked DEP whether grant money can be used to fund a 3<sup>rd</sup>-party owned and operated DC fast charger. The city is hoping to procure upgrading lighting in last five city buildings through on-bill financing and is working with procurement to see how this might be done. Chris held a productive call with National Grid staff to help them help us identify a strategy(ies) to electrify our fleets. Developed projections for next year’s energy budgets and has been checking distribution of NMCs to electric accounts to make sure the right amounts are going to each account. Chris provided a chart of municipal GHG emissions over time to the planning department and was pleased to see for FY2020 a 20% decline since FY2009. <http://northampton.front-kla-prod.2ambh.com/category/energy>

Tree Warden: Working on Pleasant St. project and Florence streetscape. The Urban Forestry Commission is developing it’s planting plan for the spring of 2021 and exploring how to strengthen the tree ordinance. They are also looking at how two-family by right zoning will impact private urban trees.

**Action Items:**

- Chris will add “Discussion on what CRRP actions are effective” to the February agenda.
- Chris will write and send out letters to legislators and the governor re: the climate bill.
- Ashley will continue work on CO2 sequestration
- Wayne will accept ideas and decide on how to spend the \$15K funds leftover from CRRP development.

The Committee adjourned at 6:00 PM.

## Cooler Communities Handout

NESC meeting - January 28, 2021

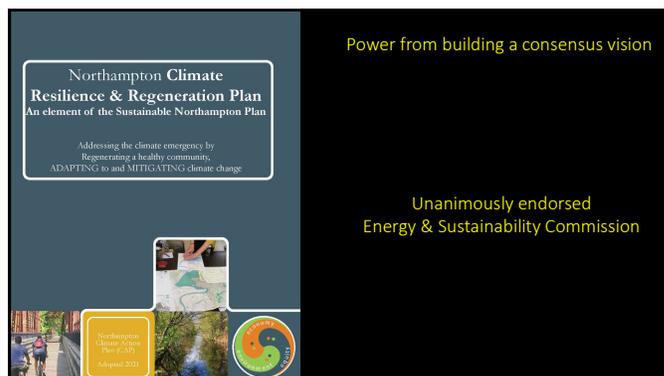
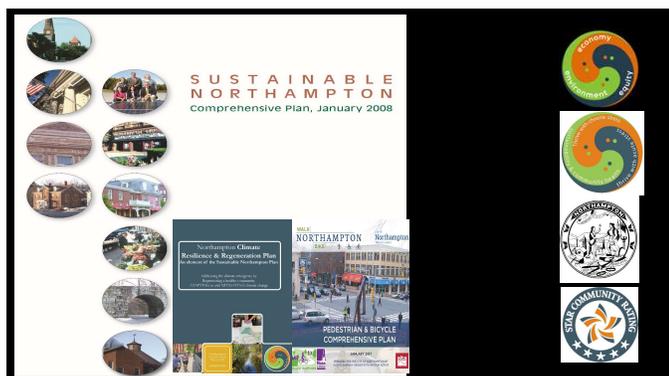
Prepared by Mary Jane Eustace, Cooler Communities Community Liaison

[maryjaneustace@ener-g-save.com](mailto:maryjaneustace@ener-g-save.com)

- Cooler Communities connects classroom learning to climate solutions and empowers students to make a measurable difference in their community and see the impact their learning can have in real life.
- Students' curriculum learning on energy, climate and conservation forms the centerpiece of a fair that the whole community is invited to. All classes and clubs - including STEM, civics, ELA, social studies, and the arts - can participate if they work on these topics.
- A close collaboration with a town's energy commissions is encouraged to tailor the students' learning as well as the event to the town's specific goals and needs, whether this is promoting energy efficiency, a special solar or heat pump program etc.
- The fair can be presented in-person or virtual. Here (<https://community.massenergize.org/pioneervalley>) is an example of an online platform that we are developing for virtual events in Agawam, Springfield, and Hadley.
- Visitors to the fair learn from and get inspired by the students' work. They also meet vendors and service providers that work in the field who can offer further advice and information.
- Visitors are then asked to pledge actions (<https://community.massenergize.org/pioneervalley/actions>), large or small, for the benefit of the earth and their wallet.(It all goes together!) At in-person events, a mobile app can be used to make more accurate calculations about carbon emissions saved when certain pledges are taken.
- For extended campaigns, an online platform can be used and the impact of actions measured and viewed by all visitors to the platform's impact page (<https://community.massenergize.org/pioneervalley/impact>).
- The school district receives a \$5000 grant for participating in the event.

This is a video ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k\\_aN78AK8IE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k_aN78AK8IE)) about Cooler Communities.

Our goal is to create measurable change by leveraging students' work and engagement.



- [ResilienceRegeneration.com](http://ResilienceRegeneration.com)  
–plan and eventually appendices
- [DesignResiliency.com](http://DesignResiliency.com)  
–Resilience plan dashboard

**Resilience:** Increasing the capacity of our city to better anticipate, adapt and thrive in a changing climate no matter what kinds of acute shocks and chronic stresses we experience. Climate **adaptation** is part of the city's resilience efforts.

**Regeneration:** Reducing our city's contribution to climate change, while renewing the health of natural and human systems damaged by climate change, and growing the vitality of people, the economy and ecosystems for the future. Climate **mitigation** is part of the city's regeneration efforts.

### The Plan: A Commitment

- Net carbon neutral citywide by 2050
  - 50% lower emissions by 2030, 75% lower emissions by 2040
- City buildings and operations net carbon neutral by 2030
- Resilience and regeneration in all plans & capital budgets
- Equity into all climate actions
  - Distributional | Procedural | Structural | Intergenerational | Cultural

### The Plan: A Road-Map

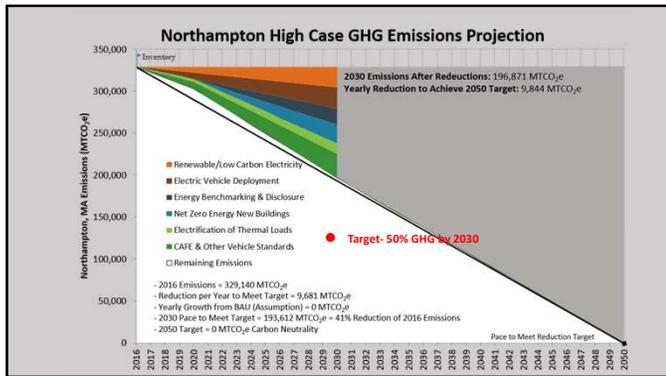
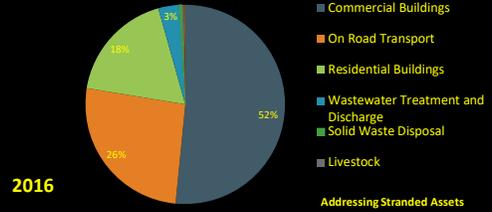
- 1<sup>st</sup> step is conservation and reduction (e.g., energy, transport)
- Top priority is high impact practices
  - Highest Return on Investment (ROI)
- Resilience from physical (e.g., storm water) to social investments
- Biennial resilience and regeneration action plan
- Coordinated responses across all of city government

We are planning for Scopes 1 and 2

- Scope 1:** Direct emissions (i.e., in Northampton or City Operations)
- Scope 2:** Indirect emissions utilities (e.g., emissions from power plant, methane from gas drilling and delivery)
- Scope 3:** Indirect emissions from supply chain



GHG Emissions (Scope 1 and 2)



Regeneration: High Impact Pathways



Resilience: High Impact Pathways



Crosscutting Road Map

- Long term and annual City carbon budget
- Evaluate Capital Improvement Program with climate lens
- Prioritize frontline communities
- Consider climate in all planning
- Incorporate into all education
- Adequate staff and resources
- Biennial action plan
- Focus on high impact practices

### Renewable and Resilient Energy Supply

- **Regional Entity & Community Choice Aggregation (CCA 3.0)**
- Renewable on City property and partnerships
- Distributed energy for critical services

*Electricity is 20% of our energy load  
It will grow with electrification*

### Energy Efficiency and High Performance Buildings

- Help the market to value energy features
- **Expand building electrification**
- Resilience and regeneration point system in site plan review
- Require buildings be built to net zero, when possible
- Encourage resilience and regeneration improvements
- Accelerate community adoption

*Buildings generate 70% of our GHG*

### Carbon Sequestration Offsets

- Manage City open space for soil carbon storage
- Protect and grow city open space to store carbon
- Educate in regenerative agriculture and forestry
- Establish GHG offset fund

*Offsets are critical to be NET neutral*

### Stormwater, Water and Waste

- Identify new regulatory design storm intensities
- Size drainage pipes for climate change storm events
- Design with Nature: Identify more green infrastructure options
- Research long term water supply needs
- Increase community waste and food waste diversions

*Solid waste is 1% of our GHGs. It is dwarfed  
By generation of "stuff" we buy (Scope 3)*

### Transportation and Land Use

- Advance equitable transportation access
- Expand bicycling, including ValleyBike
- Transition to electric vehicles
- Encourage dense, mixed-use development
- Protect land critical for migration of plants and animals

*Transportation is 26% of GHG  
Land use is a major factor*

### Equity

- Support climate champions and strong neighborhoods
- Partner with community organizations
- Workforce development

*Nothing is possible without building social capital*

### Health and Safety

- Mitigate heat at streetscapes and open space
- Zoning for flood and fluvial erosion
- Land acquisition for flood management
- Assess natural ecosystems for resilience
- Prepare for vector and water-borne diseases
- Upgrade flood control systems
- Provide hazard and climate change information
- **Develop Community Resilience Hub**

*Nothing is possible without building social capital*



Northampton Climate  
**Resilience & Regeneration Plan**  
An element of the Sustainable Northampton Plan

Addressing the climate emergency by  
Regenerating a healthy community.  
ADAPTING to and MITIGATING climate change

**Energy & Sustainability Commission:**  
endorsed 12/22/20

**Planning Board:**  
public hearing 1/28/21 for adoption

**City Council:**  
for endorsement after Planning Board

**Climate action home:**  
[WWW.ResilienceRegeneration.com](http://WWW.ResilienceRegeneration.com)

**Climate dashboard:**  
[WWW.DesignResiliency.com](http://WWW.DesignResiliency.com)

**SENATE . . . . . No. 7**

---

**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

---



CHARLES D. BAKER  
GOVERNOR

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
**COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS**  
STATE HOUSE · BOSTON, MA 02133  
(617) 725-4000

KARYN POLITO  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

*January 14, 2021*

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives,

The Commonwealth needs bold and urgent action on climate change, which is why my Administration has worked closely with the Legislature to advance the development of clean energy, reduce emissions, and establish a bold, new goal of Net Zero greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2050. As the state commits to these ambitious targets, our approach must be data-driven, built on a solid policy framework, and allow us to meet our emissions reductions goals while maintaining a healthy, equitable, and thriving economy in Massachusetts.

On the evening of January 4, 2021, you laid on my desk Senate Bill No. 2995, “An Act creating a next-generation roadmap for Massachusetts climate policy.” While I support the bill’s goals and am largely in agreement with many of its proposals, 35 hours was not enough time to review and suggest amendments to such complex legislation. Over the past ten days, my Administration has worked diligently to review Senate Bill No. 2995 and, for the reasons explained hereafter, there are certain provisions in this bill to which I cannot agree. Had this bill been presented to me with more time while the Legislature was still in session, I would have returned it with amendments to address the concerns set out in this letter. Unfortunately, because the Legislature has adjourned, I do not have that option, and therefore, reluctantly, I cannot sign the legislation as currently written for the following reasons:

- As written, the legislation will work against the critical intent of the recently enacted Housing Choice legislation, and this is a time when the Commonwealth needs more affordable housing.

- There is nothing in this bill to address the ongoing and future impacts of climate change. If we intend to comprehensively address climate change, we must give ourselves and our colleagues in local government the tools necessary to create a Commonwealth that is more resilient to the destructive weather events we continue to face because of ongoing climate change.
- While my Administration wholeheartedly supports the environmental justice goals of this bill, intent without the tools to address those issues are empty promises. This bill does not have language to address the ongoing impacts of climate change faced by those communities.
- We are in the midst of working with all the Northeastern states on a massive undertaking to change the way we all procure clean energy. We are working together because we share the same power grid and there is a tremendous opportunity to make a major difference if we work as a region on building clean power solutions. Certain provisions in this bill will endanger that work.
- Many of the mandates in this legislation are not supported by scientific and detailed data analysis, and ignore the very important criteria for making decisions establishing the GWSA, which remains the North Star for all of our efforts here in the Commonwealth.
- Finally, the Massachusetts economy is just beginning to recover from the pandemic downturn caused by the novel coronavirus known as COVID-19. As we are all learning what the future will hold, I have concerns about the impacts portions of this bill will have for large sectors of the economy.

I commend the Legislature for including important provisions in Senate Bill No. 2995, related to environmental justice, Net Zero, natural gas pipeline safety, and energy efficiency standards for appliances. I understand that the Legislature intends to refile Senate Bill No. 2995, and look forward to working with both chambers in the coming days to improve the bill and quickly reach agreement on ambitious, bipartisan legislation that builds upon Massachusetts' leadership in addressing climate change.

While we are in agreement on our climate goals, we differ on how these goals should best be achieved. Critically, the proposed legislation relies on certain out-of-date policies to reduce emissions and does not use exhaustive scientific data and analysis compiled by the Administration over the course of two years, as required by the Legislature under the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2008 (GWSA), to support its conclusions. Furthermore, the bill does not acknowledge essential issues like climate adaptation and resiliency, the urgent need to develop affordable housing, and ensuring a cost-effective and equitable transition to a clean energy future.

Our Commonwealth faces a housing shortage that threatens the future of families and businesses throughout the state, which is why my Administration filed An Act to Promote Housing Choices to ease barriers to the development of affordable housing. My Administration has heard significant concerns from stakeholders regarding the Legislature’s proposal for a net zero energy stretch code, which could slow the development of new housing while raising costs for Massachusetts families. Rick Sullivan, CEO of the WesternMass Economic Development Council and former Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs under Governor Deval Patrick, noted that “[w]hile there are many aspects of the TUE conference report that are worthwhile, creating a new building code with undefined terms like ‘net zero building’ is, quite literally, dangerous. It will likely result in construction slowing or outright stopping in many localities due to unknown, and right now, unknowable new requirements. Such a requirement is neither sound nor sustainable economic development or energy policy.” And the Massachusetts Building Trades Council warns that the legislation’s language relative to the “stretch building code” would “result in a multitude of building codes across the Commonwealth with the possibility of codes being changed mid-development potentially causing a suspension of new construction.” While my Administration supports developing and proposing a new high-performance energy stretch code to the Board of Building Regulation and Standards as detailed in our Clean Energy and Climate Plan, it is imperative that any such proposal is executed in a manner that does not impact the production of affordable housing stock and offers opportunity for public input and dialogue with all stakeholders.

Reducing emissions must be the first line of defense against climate change, but each year Massachusetts communities face greater threats and costs from climate impacts like severe storms, sea level rise, flooding, and droughts, and any comprehensive proposal must include tools to reduce the impacts of ongoing climate change and provide new funding to build a more resilient Commonwealth. Senate Bill No. 2995 missed a significant opportunity by not also addressing our ability to build greater resiliency in the Commonwealth. Two years ago, I filed Senate Bill 10, which would provide \$130 million annually for communities to address resiliency challenges. This legislation unfortunately did not advance, despite the benefits it would have for communities and residents across the Commonwealth, the growing cost of climate change, and the significant need demonstrated through my Administration’s Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness program.

My Administration remains committed to supporting environmental justice communities and agrees wholeheartedly with the Legislature that strong consideration for the Commonwealth’s most vulnerable residents must be part of any comprehensive climate legislation. However, environmental justice communities are not only overburdened by global warming pollution, but are the most impacted by the growing effects of climate change and are least able to adapt. Therefore, it is imperative that any proposed environmental justice language address the ongoing impacts of climate change as environmental burdens faced by these communities.

Almost a year ago, recognizing the scientific consensus that bold, urgent action is required to mitigate and prevent the most severe impacts of climate change, my Administration committed the Commonwealth to an ambitious and legally binding limit of Net Zero emissions by 2050. To determine how to best achieve this limit affordably and equitably, my Administration completed a comprehensive two-year, science-based analysis of the pathways that would position the Commonwealth to reach Net Zero by 2050. As a result of this first-in-the-nation comprehensive study, on December 30, 2020 we released our 2050 Decarbonization Roadmap (Roadmap), the Massachusetts Clean Energy and Climate Plan (CECP) for 2030, and Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Theoharides established a statewide GHG emissions limit of 45% below the 1990 GHG emissions level for 2030. The Roadmap includes a detailed analysis of pathways to Net Zero emissions, including an analysis of potential energy resources, projected energy demand, and the supply necessary to meet the demand in all sectors of the economy. Building on that analysis, the CECP for 2030 outlines a detailed plan and the policies needed to implement over the next decade to meet the 2030 emissions limit of 45% below 1990 levels.

Senate Bill No. 2995 requires additional interim emissions limits, new sublimits for particular sectors of the economy, and mandates that the limit for 2030 be at least 50% below 1990 levels. While the Administration and the Legislature are in agreement on the need to achieve Net Zero by 2050, scientific analysis shows that requiring emissions reductions greater than 45% in 2030 risks imposing undue expense and unnecessary economic impact on Massachusetts households and businesses – including those that can least afford it. The Administration’s analysis is clear that the difference between 45% and 50% means significantly more cost – an additional \$6 billion in costs incurred by residents – and associated impacts for the state economy. Unfortunately, this higher cost does not materially increase the Commonwealth’s ability to achieve its long-term climate goals.

Further, sector-based sublimits add unnecessary hurdles to achieving emissions reductions in a cost-effective and equitable manner by artificially requiring that emissions in a given year must reduce in a given sector, rather than allowing the Commonwealth to achieve emission reductions more holistically and efficiently. As illustrated in the Administration’s CECP for 2030, 2050 Decarbonization Roadmap, and 2030 Emissions Limit Determination letter – all released before the Legislature passed this bill – the 45% limit set by the Administration and supported by scientific analysis is a nation-leading target that positions the Commonwealth to achieve Net Zero by 2050 cost-effectively and equitably. The CECP for 2030 and 2050 Decarbonization Roadmap also highlight the importance of developing an inventory for carbon sequestration from natural and working lands and other sources in reaching Net Zero by 2050, a critical opportunity missed by the Legislature which we believe merits due consideration given its significant role in helping the Commonwealth achieve its climate goals.

In addition to changing the manner in which the GWSA authorizes emissions limits, this bill would amend foundational definitions and authorities in the GWSA. As written, those

amendments could have serious, negative repercussions for existing and planned regulatory initiatives to reduce GHG emissions in the Commonwealth, including the Transportation and Climate Initiative Program. These definitions are an example of a proposal to which I would have proposed amendments if I had the opportunity.

Our Administration has partnered with the Legislature to secure nation-leading procurements of offshore wind and hydropower, and is working to ensure that those new clean energy resources are built and interconnected to provide cost-effective clean power to Massachusetts ratepayers. As demonstrated in the Administration's 2050 Decarbonization Roadmap, a balanced clean energy supply anchored by offshore wind can help the Commonwealth achieve Net Zero by 2050 in a cost-effective manner while supporting job creation in Massachusetts. However, my Administration believes that rather than choosing clean energy winners and losers, we should instead let the resources compete in a manner that delivers the most benefit at the least cost to Massachusetts ratepayers. To that end, in October 2020 the Commonwealth joined other New England states in calling for a multi-state effort to pivot our regional electricity system planning and market structure to ensure the region is able to achieve our shared climate goals. We urge the Legislature to allow this process to reform our regional energy system to mature over the coming months, at which point we will better understand whether future state procurements are necessary, or if opportunities for regional procurements and coordination emerge as a more effective approach to secure clean energy resources while protecting Massachusetts ratepayers.

For all of these reasons, I am returning this bill unsigned. While I cannot sign Senate Bill No. 2995, I strongly commend the Legislature's work to pass legislation that addresses the urgent challenge of climate change, which presents a growing threat to our residents, environment and economy. In the coming days, I look forward to the opportunity to engage in a constructive, thoughtful dialogue on these important policy proposals with our partners in the Legislature to set the Commonwealth on a path for Net Zero by 2050 through aggressive, equitable and science-based climate action while protecting the state's economy and most vulnerable residents.

Respectfully submitted,

Charles D. Baker,  
*Governor*