



City of Northampton
MASSACHUSETTS

In the City Council, August 15, 2019

Upon the Recommendation of: Councilor Alisa F. Klein
 Councilor William H. Dwight

R-19.123

A RESOLUTION CALLING FOR THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO PASS A GREEN NEW DEAL

WHEREAS, the Northampton City Council is interested in ensuring that the children, grandchildren, and all subsequent generations of children to come in our community are protected from the risks posed by the global climate emergency; and

WHEREAS, Northampton has long been a leader in climate action; to wit:

- In its January 18, 2018 “Resolution in Support of 100 Percent Renewable Energy,” the Northampton City Council stated its support for “rapid attainment of a goal of 100 percent clean, renewable energy for the State of Massachusetts and the City of Northampton;”
- In its April 20, 2017 “Resolution Calling on the Massachusetts Legislature to Establish Carbon Pollution Pricing to Curb Climate Change” the Northampton City Council called for the Massachusetts State legislature to pass legislation imposing a fee on the carbon dioxide that is emitted in the use of fossil fuels;
- Mayor David Narkewicz publicly stated support for the climate change mitigation goals enshrined in the Paris Agreement, pledged that the city will become “net-zero” by the year 2050, and joined the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy in its shared vision for unified action to combat climate change;
- In follow-up to its ten-year Sustainable Northampton Plan, Northampton is just completing a ten-year Climate Resilience and Regeneration Plan as a roadmap for actualizing the above commitments and carrying out comprehensive steps towards transitioning from fossil fuels to renewable energy sources, increasing energy efficiency, and creating systems for the consumption of fewer resources; and

WHEREAS, an October 2018 United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report says that we have only until 2030 to limit devastating global warming and avoid a climate change catastrophe; and

WHEREAS, the October 2018 IPCC report also makes clear that every bit of warming matters, so every fraction of a degree less of warming will save lives and pay dividends across the world’s economies; and

WHEREAS, the world is already experiencing serious, costly, and increasing impacts from climate change, including, but not limited to, intense storms, unprecedented flooding, persistent wildfires, longer and hotter heat waves, worsening flood and drought cycles, growing invasive species and insect problems, accelerated species extinction rates, rising sea levels, decreased air quality that leads to health problems, and a dramatic increase in refugees from climate impacted lands; and

WHEREAS, an inadequate response to climate change will increase not only the above environmental harms, but will also result in economic catastrophes that threaten human life, the health of communities, and critical infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, the most negative impacts of climate change are generally falling on frontline communities such as low-income people, immigrants, and people of color. These communities bear a disproportionate burden of climate change, yet have contributed to climate change the least and have the fewest resources to manage its negative impacts. For decades, frontline communities have been the first to be harmed by pollution and the last to be rebuilt after climate disasters strike. Yet all communities in Northampton -- and throughout the United States - - have the right to clean air and water, protection from disasters, and access to healthy food, no matter their income level, the color of their skin, or where they were born; and

WHEREAS, doing what is now necessary to adequately address the climate crisis requires a national mobilization of a scope and scale that is a historic opportunity to address inequities caused and exacerbated by the fossil fuel economy as well as providing unprecedented levels of prosperity and economic security for all people in the United States; and

WHEREAS, on February 7, 2019, U.S. Senator Edward Markey and U.S. Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez released [a Resolution](#) Recognizing the duty of the Federal Government to create a Green New Deal; and

WHEREAS, the federal Green New Deal legislation would create a detailed mobilization plan to:

- Within a decade, achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions through a fair and just transition for all communities and workers;
- Create millions of good, high-wage jobs and ensure prosperity and economic security for all people of the United States;
- Invest in the infrastructure and industry of the United States to sustainably meet the challenges of the 21st century;
- Secure for all people of the United States for generations to come:
 - clean air and water;

- climate and community resiliency;
- healthy food;
- access to nature;
- and a sustainable environment; and
- Promote justice and equity by stopping current, preventing future, and repairing historic oppression of indigenous communities, communities of color, migrant communities, deindustrialized communities, depopulated rural communities, the poor, low-income workers, women, the elderly, the unhoused, people with disabilities, and youth; and

WHEREAS: To achieve these goals, the Green New Deal legislation calls for a 10-year national mobilization effort, which would include:

- Building resilience against climate change-related disasters;
- Providing funding for community-based solutions to climate change;
- Overhauling transportation systems to remove pollution and greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation sector as much as is technologically feasible;
- Repairing and upgrading infrastructure;
- Expanding the use of clean, renewable and zero-emission sources of power with the goal of zeroing out fossil fuel sources;
- Creating energy-efficient, distributed, and "smart" power grids;
- Cleaning up existing hazardous waste and abandoned sites; identifying other pollution sources and creating solutions to remove them;
- Maximizing water and energy efficiency in new buildings and by retrofitting existing buildings;
- Removing greenhouse gases and restoring natural ecosystems through proven low-tech solutions that increase soil carbon storage, such as land preservation and reforestation;
- Removing pollution and greenhouse gas emissions from industry as much as is technologically feasible;
- Restoring and protecting fragile ecosystems by enhancing biodiversity; and

WHEREAS, local governments calling for the federal government to pass a Green New Deal will demonstrate widespread popular support for necessary and just climate action.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of Northampton hereby calls on the U.S. Senate and House to, as soon as possible, pass a Green New Deal based on the resolution released by Senator Markey and Representative Ocasio-Cortez.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Administrative Assistant to the City Council shall cause a copy of this resolution to be sent to U.S. Senator Edward J. Markey; U.S. Senator Elizabeth

