RESOLUTION OF THE BOONE TOWN COUNCIL SUPPORTING A STATE GOAL OF 100% CLEAN ENERGY BY 2050 AND THE CREATION OF GREEN JOBS

Whereas, climate change has increased the global average surface temperature by 1.00 degrees Celsius (1.8 degrees Fahrenheit) since 1880;

Whereas, climate change is expected to increasingly impact North Carolina's temperatures, precipitation and sea level with harmful consequences in coming years;

Whereas, climate change and global average temperature increases are primarily due to human-caused fossil fuels emissions, including coal, oil and natural gas, according to the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, National Academy of Science, American Meteorological Society, United States Environmental Protection Agency, United States Department of Defense, and numerous other leading scientific, academic and governmental authorities both in the United States and internationally;

Whereas, a final agreement of the United Nations Conference of Parties (COP21), which included the United States and a total of 195 nations, was reached in Paris, France on December 12, 2015, that states the aim is to "holding the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2 degrees Celsius above preindustrial levels and pursuing efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius above preindustrial levels" and entered into force on November 4, 2016;

Whereas, scientists have concluded the concentration of carbon dioxide, the leading greenhouse gas, in the Earth's atmosphere is currently and consistently over 400 parts per million (ppm) and will likely stay above this level for the indefinite future for the first time in millions of years;

Whereas, sixteen of the seventeen hottest years on record have occurred in the twenty-first century and 2016 is the hottest year on record;

Whereas, an increase in the global average temperature, if not stopped, will have major adverse impacts on both the natural and human-made environments due to longer, more intense heat waves, prolonged droughts, rising sea levels, ocean acidification, and more intense and frequent extreme weather events;

Whereas, these physical effects are expected to lead to water scarcity, food insecurity, increasing numbers of refugees, increased poverty, and mass extinctions of species;

Whereas, studies completed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Risky Business Project, Duke University, and others point to the severe economic costs of climate change and continuing use of fossil fuel, estimating billions of dollars a year in costs nationally and trillions globally;

Whereas, leading economists, policy experts, and business leaders conclude that transitioning to a clean energy economy available for all would create millions of green jobs nationally, improve our living standards, and boost economic growth in coming years;

Whereas, low-income communities and communities of color in North Carolina and the United States are inordinately exposed to pollution, that causes serious health problems such as cancer and asthma, from fossil fuels, including the dirtiest coal-fired power plants which produce coal ash, are disproportionately located in communities of color;

Whereas, a Stanford University and University of California-Davis study concludes the United States energy supply could be based entirely on renewable energy by the year 2050

using current technologies and 80% renewable energy by 2030 while creating numerous green jobs;

Whereas, municipalities, organizations, businesses, and academic institutions throughout the world have set a goal to achieve carbon or climate neutrality by 2050 or earlier;

Whereas, over 600 American colleges and universities have made a commitment to reduce greenhouse gases, including Appalachian State University, Blue Ridge Community College, Carteret Community College, Catawba College, Central Carolina Community College, Davidson College, Duke University, Elizabeth City State University, Fayetteville State University, Guilford College, North Carolina Central University, Queens University of Charlotte, Southeastern Community College, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina at Charlotte, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, University of North Carolina at Pembroke, Wake Technical Community College, and Warren Wilson College;

Whereas, North Carolina installed 1,140 MW of solar electric capacity in 2015, ranking it second nationally; nearly $1.7 billion was invested on solar installations in North Carolina, a 159% increase over the previous year; there are currently more than 200 solar companies at work throughout the value chain in North Carolina of which five are in Boone, the state companies employing some 6,000 people; North Carolina ranks third in the nation in installed solar capacity, enough to power 260,000 homes; and solar photovoltaic system prices in the U.S. have dropped by 66% since 2010;

Whereas, North Carolina has more offshore wind energy potential than any Atlantic state;

Whereas, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Fifth Assessment Report recommended a global goal of achieving near zero greenhouse gas emissions or below, which is necessary to stabilize the global average temperature to avoid climate catastrophe;

Now, therefore,
Be it resolved by the Boone Town Council that it endorses the following:

SECTION 1. The State of North Carolina and the United States shall establish a transition from a fossil fuel-based economy to a 100% clean renewable energy for all energy sectors-based economy, by December 31, 2050 to avoid climate catastrophe, to promote job creation and economic growth, and to protect the Earth for current and future generations from climate catastrophe.

SECTION 2. This resolution is effective upon adoption.

The North Carolina Climate Solutions Coalition
November 26, 2016

The world is now, in 2016, facing its largest challenge ever other than nuclear war. A massive nuclear war could take out most of the humans on the Earth as well as most other living things in the flashes of this terrible "pinnacle" of human technological accomplishment. The only time the world used nuclear weapons, in 1945, we showed what two individual tiny nukes can do—compared to today's multiple and huge warheads. We must never even seriously consider this potential world-ending conflagration.

But as it turns out, we now have accumulated on Earth, technology which can destroy the Earth as well, but with an invisible accumulation of deadly gasses, mainly CO2 and CH4. By comparison to nuclear war, climate warming is slow and reminds one of the classic case of the live bullfrog in a pot of water on the stove which is being heated, and slowly but surely, gradually reaching a deadly boil as the frog sees no reason for fear. But the frog's tiny brain has absolutely no way of suspecting disaster. Humans' very large brain has brought us the best way of understanding Nature through science and has provided so many positives for now billions of humans. But science is being ignored by a tiny percentage of very influential humans, and some of them like the frog, are ignoring their brain and the ever hotter and hotter water (air).

Around 200 countries are ready to move ahead and face the settled science of climate change and stop the impending catastrophe—it is of paramount importance to realize we have technology off the shelf today that can solve the problem. The 200 countries are begging the most powerful nation in the world, the United States, to wake up and deal with reality. U.S. scientists are sounding the disaster alarm in their best deafening fashion, telling us if we don't begin within the next very few years to provide a crash course in applying the existing technologies of solar, wind, and energy conservation, the cost of climate change solutions will be so much we may not be able to do it with all the countries in the world paying, including the recalcitrant United States.

The Republican party of the U. S. is leading the insane charge to ignore reality (science) for the world. Really? Yes! Politics is likely to lead us down the garden path (?) for at least another four years, and we will soon know what the FRAM engine filter commercial means that famously said, "Pay me now, or Pay me later." A filter now compared to a new engine later, right? Or install solar wind, and energy conservation now or consider moving to Mars later (not too much later)!

If this seems like an overly philosophical analysis so far, remember; I am an Anthropologist, and I see the world through the concepts of culture, society, politics and the like. We are past time for being careful not to hurt other's feelings. We are at the point of pulling out all the stops to move as much and as fast as we can to solar, wind and energy conservation. A recent Pew Research Center survey found that solar farms are favored by 89% of Americans and wind farms by 83%, twice that of approval of fossil fuel and nuclear plants.

The politically powerful will do what they must, but we keep moving ahead. We activists must do what we do best, our best against their best, power on power. But we know that we are the biblical David and Trump and his forces, Goliath. Now, Goliath doesn't organize, but we do. That is what we do, that is who we are-- organizers. We must marshal as many environmental and related non-profits and individuals who will work with us. Now, we need our marching orders, and this is where we depend on the very best science of climate scientists around the world. A top-flight worldwide group of about a thousand climate scientists, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, is perhaps the most respected and authoritative.

Well now, one US group of scientists from Stanford University and UC-Davis have developed the most considered and perhaps the only plan to end climate change, beginning now! This group is called The Solutions Project and it has developed an individual roadmap for each of the 50 states. We in North Carolina are developing a coalition of individual non-profit environmental and related organizations to initiate the Jacobson Solutions Project. We are six groups at this time and growing. We plan to have our organizational meeting on December 6 here at The Climate Times office in Boone, NC.

North Carolinians were buoyed earlier this year when we found that North Carolina is second only to California nationally in solar capacity at 2295 MW, due in large part to the 35% state tax credit which the Republican deniers in the NC legislature eliminated, at least partially at the behest of Duke Energy (North Carolina's Goliath). As our coalition comes together, we would ask environmental groups across the state, now more than ever, to abandon their silos and work together to confront our Goliath! We did it around 2000 to pass the NC Clean Smokestacks Act, and we can do it again.

North Carolina has a tremendous wind resource, especially offshore. It has steady and strong winds which produce power most of the time at high levels. The efficiency of these offshore wind turbines is much more than that of coal-fired power plants. We aim to initiate the Jacobson plan starting at our organizational meeting in a week, and we hope to receive considerable technical assistance from the Stanford and UC-Davis scientists as we provide a model for other states. We look forward to passage of legislation in Congress and the North Carolina legislature to as quickly as possible transition to 100% clean, renewable energy.

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