



# Office of the City Clerk

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## Legislation Text

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**Type: Title:**

**Committee(s) Assignment:**

O'Shea (19) Tunney (44) Harris (8) Ervin (28) ' Resolution

Declaration of climate emergency and call for initiation of emergency Climate Mobilization effort  
Committee on Environmental Protection and Energy

Committee on Environmental Protection & Energy  
January 15,2020 City Council Meeting

### **RESOLUTION DECLARING A CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND EMERGENCY MOBILIZATION EFFORT TO RESTORE A SAFE CLIMATE**

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

WHEREAS, the death and destruction already wrought by current average global warming of 1 °C demonstrate that the Earth is already too hot for safety and justice, as attested by increased and intensifying wildfires; floods, rising seas, diseases, droughts, and extreme weather; and

WHEREAS, according to the United Nations' Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty, 1.5°C of global warming could expose 500 million people to water poverty, 36 million people to food insecurity because of lower crop yields, and 4.5 billion people to heat waves; and

WHEREAS, in October 2018, the United Nations released a special report which projected that limiting warming to even the dangerous 1.5°C target this century will require an unprecedented transformation of every sector of the global economy by 2030: and

WHEREAS, the United States of America has disproportionately contributed to the climate and ecological emergencies and thus bears an extraordinary responsibility to rapidly solve these crises; and

WHEREAS, climate change will continue to make basic human necessities such as food, housing, health care, transportation and energy more expensive and difficult to obtain; and

WHEREAS, in July 2019, members of Congress introduced a concurrent Congressional resolution to declare a national climate emergency in the United States, calling for a "national, social, industrial, and economic mobilization of the resources and labor of the United States at a massive scale to halt, reverse, mitigate, and prepare for the consequences of the climate emergency and to restore the climate for future generations"; and

WHEREAS, restoring a safe and stable climate requires a Climate Mobilization, an emergency mobilization on a scale not seen since World War 11 in order to reach zero greenhouse gas emissions across all sectors of the economy; to rapidly and safely drawdown and remove all the excess carbon from the atmosphere at emergency speed and until safe, pre-industrial climate conditions are restored; and to implement measures to protect all people and species from the consequences of abrupt climate breakdown; and

WHEREAS, such necessary measures to restore a safe climate include:

- a) A rapid, just, managed divestment and phase-out of fossil fuels; and
- b) Ending greenhouse gas emissions as quickly as possible to establish a zero-emissions economy; and
- c) A widespread effort to safely drawdown excess carbon from the atmosphere; and
- d) A full transition to a regenerative agriculture system; and
- e) An end to the Sixth Mass Extinction through widespread conservation and restoration of ecosystems; and

WHEREAS, justice requires that frontline and marginalized communities, which have historically borne the brunt of the extractive fossil-fuel economy, participate actively in the planning and implementation of this mobilization effort and that they benefit first from the transition to a climate-safe economy; and

WHEREAS, the massive scope and scale of action necessary to stabilize the climate and biosphere will require unprecedented levels of public awareness, engagement, and deliberation to develop and implement effective, just, and equitable policies to address the climate emergency; and

WHEREAS, to stay within 1.5 degrees Celsius, major cities throughout the world will need to significantly reduce their per capita emissions by 2030, and as a global city, Chicago is obligated to lead by example; and

WHEREAS, the 2008 Chicago Climate Action Plan states that "Without rapid local and global action, impacts on Chicago's climate could be adverse," and that "[t]he benefits of early action will improve quality of life and preserve Chicago for future generations"; and

WHEREAS, in 2017, the City of Chicago organized global leaders to sign onto the Chicago Climate Charter, with more than 50 cities worldwide, pledging to reduce carbon emissions in line with the Paris Agreement and committed to reaching 100% renewable energy for all electricity used in municipal buildings by 2025; and

WHEREAS, the City of Chicago continues to endure myriad effects of climate change, including but not limited to catastrophic lakefront erosion, citywide flooding, and severe unseasonal weather; and

WHEREAS, in 2019, members of City Council have called for the re-establishment of the Department of Environment to oversee the implementation of climate-related policies and programs; and

WHEREAS, our communities can display their resilience by creating and executing emergency planning that is

tailored to address directly the true scope of the challenges we face; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, the City of Chicago hereby declares a state of climate emergency that threatens the health and well-being of Chicago, its inhabitants, and its environment; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, City Council will work with the Mayor's office and city departments to develop a budget that promotes urgent climate action; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the City of Chicago calls on the State of Illinois, the United States Congress, the President of the United States, and all governments and people worldwide to declare a climate emergency, initiate a Climate Mobilization to reverse global warming and the ecological crisis, and provide maximum protection for all people and species of the world; and

Matthew J. Martin, 47<sup>th</sup> Ward

George Gadenas, 12<sup>th</sup> Ward

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, in furtherance of this resolution, the City Clerk shall submit a certified copy of this resolution to elected officials at the state, and county levels and request that all relevant support and assistance in effectuating this resolution be provided.