



Office of the City Clerk

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Legislation Text

File #: R2020-572, **Version:** 1

Environmental Protection & Energy City
Council July 22, 2020

RESOLUTION CALLING ON GOVERNOR PRITZKER TO SIGN THE MULTI-STATE MEDIUM AND HEAVY DUTY ZERO EMISSION VEHICLE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

WHEREAS, Climate change poses a real and serious threat to the global population, having already resulted in devastating consequences for the residents of the State of Illinois and the City of Chicago, including deteriorating air quality, increased extreme weather events and natural disasters including sea level rise and flooding and elevated temperatures; and

WHEREAS, These devastating impacts and consequential effects of climate change, will continue unless decisive, immediate action is taken; and

WHEREAS, A leading cause of climate change is human generated greenhouse gas emissions from fossil fuel combustion, and, in the United States, the transportation sector is the largest source of such emissions; and

WHEREAS, Electrification of the transportation sector and divestment in the fossil fuel industry is essential to achieving substantial progress in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and alleviating the adverse impacts climate change has caused and will continue to cause; and

WHEREAS, The majority all green revenue jobs, an estimated 27.7%, are in the transportation and material moving sector, according to the 2012 U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics; and

WHEREAS, To help jump-start the electrification of the transportation industry, several states have already signed the Multi-State Medium and Heavy Duty Zero Emission Vehicle Memorandum of Understanding (the "Memorandum") pledging to coordinate each signee's actions to ensure a national reduction in greenhouse gas emissions is achieved and to address environmental justice problems that typically impact disadvantaged communities; and

WHEREAS, The environmental solutions pledged in the Memorandum include a commitment to making all medium and heavy duty vehicles sold in each state's jurisdiction "zero-emission" vehicles by 2050, and modernizing governmental fleets and public transportation systems by retiring diesel-powered vehicles in favor of their electrical counterparts; and

WHEREAS, While the Chicago Transit Authority has pledged to move its bus operations to an all-electric fleet by 2040 and the Mayor has further pledged an all-electric bus fleet by 2030, as of Fall 2019, only three such buses were in operation, and the City continues to invest in diesel powered buses, extending the City's reliance on fossil fuels; and

WHEREAS, A concerted and coordinated effort from all levels of government is required to encourage the transportation sector to shift from fossil fuel vehicles to zero-based emissions electrical vehicles and bridge the gaps preventing this shift, including constructing the necessary infrastructure to support medium and heavy duty electric vehicles and modernizing public transportation systems in urban environments; and

WHEREAS, On November 13, 2019, the Chicago City Council demanded for Governor J.B. Pritzker and the Illinois General Assembly to pass the Clean Energy Jobs Act acknowledging the need for a green new deal and to shift Illinois to a green economy, and recognizing the severity of climate change, in January 15, 2020 the Chicago City Council declared a climate emergency, signifying the Council's support in actively addressing climate-related issues; and

WHEREAS, The Memorandum serves as a roadmap to reduce greenhouse gasses and details the decisive actions needed to address climate change; now, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, That we, the members of the City Council of the City of Chicago, gathered here this twenty-second day of July, 2020, do hereby call upon Governor J.B. Pritzker to make Illinois a signatory of the Multi-State Medium and Heavy Duty Zero Emission Vehicle Memorandum of Understanding pledging Illinois to be a leader in transportation greenhouse gas reduction and making a shift towards a greener economy; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, A suitable copy of this resolution be prepared and presented to Governor J.B. Pritzker for consideration.

GEORGE A. CARDENAS
Alderman, 12th Ward