



# Office of the City Clerk

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## Legislation Text

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### Committee on Budget and Government Operations

January 27, 2021

#### ORDER

WHEREAS, climate change poses an existential threat to current and future generations; the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) posits that climate change is now very close to crossing the point of no return and to causing catastrophic consequences from which we may never recover; and

WHEREAS, the global climate crisis has already led to the rise in sea levels and an increase in extreme weather events; and

WHEREAS, the global temperature is on pace to increase 1.5 degrees Celsius between 2030 and 2052 as a result of the emission of greenhouse gases due to human activities; and

WHEREAS, due to climate change, the number of days exceeding 100-degrees Fahrenheit in Illinois is expected to continue to grow to as many as 60 days per year by the end of the century; and

WHEREAS, Chicago is both expected to see more consecutive dry days per year and an increase of precipitation through major storm events through the end of the century; and

WHEREAS, severe storm events increase the chances of flooding, land erosion, and the risk of overwhelming stormwater management systems; and

WHEREAS, longer dry spells and increased temperatures will lead to greater evaporation, more frost-free days, and reduced snowpack - impacting the levels of the lake over time; and ,

WHEREAS, Lake Michigan's shoreline is at risk of deleterious consequences from the impacts of climate change, including water contamination, declining cold water species, and an increased chance for occurrence of Harmful Algal Blooms (HABS) from increased water temperatures; and

WHEREAS, the Environmental Protection Agency reported that Chicago's shuttered Fisk and Crawford coal plants, located in Pilsen and Little Village, led to 2,800 asthma attacks annually,

demonstrating that the actual drivers of climate change are already disproportionately affecting communities of color and low-income families; and

WHEREAS, on average, communities of color breathe in roughly 38 percent more polluted air than their White counterparts; and

WHEREAS, communities of color are most likely to be located near smoke-belching factories, busy highways, power plants and other hazardous sites due to redlining and other inequitable housing policies that country, state, and city government agencies have enforced; and

WHEREAS, it is our government's duty to look out for the quality of life for all residents equally and justly, especially those with the fewest resources to cope with heat waves, floods, pollution, and all impacts of climate change; and

WHEREAS, Chicago needs to continue to reverse the course of ending climate inequality that leaves some neighborhoods as sacrifice zones for pollution and climate-related disasters; 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 cost of climate change strains local, state, and federal economies as they are required to respond to climate change-fueled weather disasters; and

WHEREAS, absent of proactive mitigation efforts, the U.S. could spend hundreds of billions of dollars by the end of the century responding to climate change crises; according to the 2018 Fourth National Climate Assessment the projected costs of unmitigated climate change will surpass the GDP of many U.S. states, which would lead to deleterious impacts on the overall economy; and

WHEREAS, under a Biden administration, a more aggressive approach to curtail the impacts of Climate Change will become a priority, therefore making available to states and municipalities federal monies for mitigation efforts; now, therefore

**BE IT ORDERED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CHICAGO:**

The Chief Sustainability Officer and the Budget Director for the City of Chicago shall deliver to the Committee on Budget and Government Oversight a report on the costs to re-establish a

Department' on the Environment, focused on the impact, mitigation, and prevention on pollution and climate change, for the City ofChicago within 150 days of the passage of this order.

MARIA HADDEN Alderman, 49th  
Ward