

Climate Emergency Resolution: March 28, 2022

RECITALS

- A.** In August of 2021 the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPPC) issued its lengthy report on climate change stating that human activities have resulting in the world warming by more than one degree Celsius—nearly 2 degrees Fahrenheit.
- B.** The report confirms what is already observable--global warming is causing fiercer heat waves and droughts, longer fire seasons, heavier rainstorms and more violent hurricanes and cyclones.
- C.** The UN Secretary General has characterized the report as “*code red for humanity.*”
- D.** Under the IPCC’s most optimistic scenario for the future of our planet, *the earth’s carbon emissions must fall to net zero during the next few decades*, and new technologies must be invented and implemented that will remove tens of billions of tons of carbon from the earth’s atmosphere.
- E.** Scientists and experts from universities and institutions at the Great Lakes Region Environmental Law and Policy Center released *An Assessment of the Impacts of Climate Change on the Great Lakes* in 2019 warning that global warming is already causing increased temperatures; heavier precipitation and flooding; extreme weather events; diminished agricultural production; increased risk for heat-related illness, respiratory diseases, and death from heat waves and summer air pollution events; exacerbated *E. coli* concentrations and toxic algal blooms in water bodies, diminishing drinking water sources; decreasing wildlife diversity and habit; and adversely affected lake levels, shipping, and shoreline use.
- F.** Climate change has a disproportionate effect on fish and wildlife populations, many of which require specific habitat conditions and are therefore particularly vulnerable to warmer temperatures, modified precipitation patterns, diminished snowpack, ocean acidification and other effects of climate change.
- G.** On September 29, 2021 the US Fish and Wildlife Service declared extinct 22 animals and one plant, due in part to climate change. Bridget Fahey, who oversees species classification for the agency stated that “it’s a sobering reminder that extinction is a consequence of human-caused environmental change.”

- H. Global sea level rose about 8 inches (20 centimeters) in the last century. The rate in the last two decades is nearly double that of the last century, and accelerating every year.
- I. The world’s leading climate scientists, including those in the Great Lakes Integrated Sciences and Assessments Center, predict that these and other serious effects of climate change will worsen if prompt action is not taken to curb emissions.
- J. Climate change has a disproportionately adverse effect on already disadvantaged communities --indigenous tribes, rural communities, coastal communities, workers, low-income households and people of color--who typically have fewer resources for adapting to climate change and are therefore the most vulnerable to displacement, adverse health effects, job loss, property damage and other harmful effects of climate change.
- K. Climate change, pollution, environmental destruction and fossil fuel extraction and use will continue to intensify systemic racial, environmental and economic crises by disproportionately affecting indigenous communities, communities of color, migrant communities, the poor, women, young people, the elderly and people with disabilities.
- L. The United States has disproportionately contributed to the climate and ecological emergencies and thus bears an extraordinary responsibility to rapidly resolve these crises.
- M. Restoring a safe and stable climate requires a “*climate mobilization*” at all levels of government on a scale not seen since World War II to reach *net zero greenhouse gas emissions in the next few decades*.
- N. The LWVUS, along with some 50 organizations, endorsed a comprehensive set of basic principles for fair and effective climate legislation in its declaration titled “National Call to Action on Global Warming.”
- O. A “just transition” must address past and ongoing harms by focusing on essential principles of justice, inclusion, material equity, and democracy during the transition to a net zero-emissions, renewable energy economy and thriving ecology.
- P. On January 8, 2022 the League of Women Voters of Michigan adopted the following resolutions:
 - 1. Declared that a climate emergency caused by human activities threatens our region, state, nation, civilization, humanity and the natural world.
 - 2. Adopted as a *State League priority* advocating for (i) solutions to climate change that would limit global warming to no more than 1.5 degrees Celsius by 2050 to prevent the worst effects of climate change, and (ii) rectifying the disproportionately adverse effects of climate change on disadvantaged peoples, including indigenous communities, communities of color, migrant communities, the poor, women, youth, the elderly, and persons with disabilities.
 - 3. Urged *local Michigan Leagues* to adopt similar resolutions and advocate with local governments to adopt ‘Climate Emergency Declarations’ committing to take urgent action to significantly reduce net carbon emissions to net zero in the next decades.

4. Committed to (i) educating Michigan residents about our climate emergency and (ii) advocating for legislation that will codify and quickly advance climate mobilization efforts in Michigan.
5. Urged the League of Women Voters of the United States to adopt as a priority advocating for (i) solutions to climate change that would limit global warming to no more than 1.5 degrees Celsius by 2050 to prevent the worst effects of climate change, and (ii) rectifying the disproportionately adverse effects of climate change on disadvantaged peoples, including indigenous communities, communities of color, migrant communities, the poor, women, youth, the elderly, and persons with disabilities.

Resolutions

1. The League of Women Voters of Washtenaw County adopts the following Resolutions:

- a. Declares that a climate emergency caused by human activities threatens our region, state, nation, civilization, humanity and the natural world.
- b. Adopts as a priority of the League of Women Voters of Washtenaw County advocating for (i) solutions to climate change that would limit global warming to no more than 1.5 degrees Celsius by 2050 to prevent the worst effects of climate change, and (ii) rectifying the disproportionately adverse effects of climate change on disadvantaged peoples, including indigenous communities, communities of color, migrant communities, the poor, women, youth, the elderly, and persons with disabilities.
- c. Agrees to advocate with local governments to adopt ‘Climate Emergency Declarations’ committing to take urgent action to significantly reduce net carbon emissions to net zero in the next decades.
- d. Commits to (i) educating Michigan residents about our climate emergency and (ii) advocating for local ordinances and laws that will codify and quickly advance climate mobilization efforts in Michigan.
- e. Urges the League of Women Voters of the United States to adopt as a priority advocating for (i) solutions to climate change that would limit global warming to no more than 1.5 degrees Celsius by 2050 to prevent the worst effects of climate change, and (ii) rectifying the disproportionately adverse effects of climate change on disadvantaged peoples, including indigenous communities, communities of color, migrant communities, the poor, women, youth, the elderly, and persons with disabilities.

This Declaration of Climate Emergency Resolution was considered at the Board of Directors of the League of Women Voters of Washtenaw County at its meeting on March 28, 2022.

Resolution Adopted: Unanimously

References:

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. *Proposed Delisting of 23 Species from the Endangered Species Act Due to Extinction*. September 29, 2021.

“IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) 2021 Sixth Assessment Report on the impact of climate change on the world Summary for Policy Makers.
https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/sites/4/2020/02/SPM_Updated-Jan20.pdf

“IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) 2018 Special Report on the Impact of Global Warming of 1.5°C:
https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/sites/2/2019/06/SR15_Full_Report_Low_Res.pdf

“Fourth National Climate Assessment”: <https://nca2018.globalchange.gov/>

“An Assessment of the Impacts of Climate Change on the Great Lakes”
<https://elpc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/2019-ELPCPublication-Great-Lakes-Climate-Change-Report.pdf>

“Intergovernmental Science Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services”:
<https://www.ipbes.net/global-assessment>

“LWVUS National Call to Action on Global Warming”;
https://salsa.wiredforchange.com/o/5950/c/9217/images/National_Call_to_Action.pdf

“NASA: Sea Level Rise: How Do We Know”: <https://climate.nasa.gov/evidence/>.

[Climate emergency declarations in 528 councils cover 52 million citizens](https://climateemergencydeclaration.org/climate-emergency-declarations-cover-15-million-citizens/)
<https://climateemergencydeclaration.org/climate-emergency-declarations-cover-15-million-citizens/>

Synthesis of the Third National Climate Assessment for the Great Lakes
Region http://glisa.umich.edu/media/files/Great_Lakes_NCA_Synthesis.pdf

Climate Change Will Strain Michigan Infrastructure by
MLive <https://www.mlive.com/news/2019/04/climate-change-will-strain-michigan-infrastructure-say-experts.html>

What Climate Change Means for Michigan
<https://19january2017snapshot.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2016-09/documents/climate-change-mi.pdf>