

Resolution #12-R-20 – Substitute Version
Resolution urging the United States Congress to enact the
Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act

Submitted By: Alderperson Schultz – District 9, Alderperson Fenton – District 6, Alderperson Otis- District 15, Alderperson Meltzer-District 4 Date: 7-1-2020 Referred To: Finance Committee

WHEREAS, an Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change issued a special report on the impacts of global warming of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels in October 2018 warning that global warming is likely to reach 1.5°C between 2030 and 2052 if it continues to increase at the current rate.

WHEREAS, the United Nations climate science body said in a monumental climate report that we have only until 2030 to make massive and unprecedented changes to global energy infrastructure to limit global warming to moderate levels; and

WHEREAS, the United States government released its Fourth Annual Climate Assessment in November 2018 reporting that the impacts of climate change are already being felt in communities across the country, and that more frequent and intense extreme weather and climate-related events, as well as changes in average climate conditions, are expected to continue to damage infrastructure, ecosystems, and social systems that provide essential benefits to communities; and

WHEREAS, conservative estimates by the world's climate scientists state that, to achieve climate stabilization and avoid cataclysmic climate change, emissions of greenhouse gases (GHGs) must be brought to 80-95% below 1990 levels by 2050; and

WHEREAS, presently the environmental, health, and social costs of carbon emissions are not included in prices paid for fossil fuels, but rather these externalized costs are borne directly and indirectly by all Americans and global citizens; and

WHEREAS, to begin to correct this market failure, Congress can enact **HR763 the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act** to assess a national carbon fee on fossil fuels based on the amount of CO₂ the fuel will emit when burned and allocate the collected proceeds to all U.S. Households in equal per-capita shares in the form of a monthly dividend; and

WHEREAS, for efficient administration, the fossil fuels fee can be applied once, as far upstream in the economy as practical, or at the port of entry into the United States; and

WHEREAS, the City of Appleton established the Appleton Taskforce on Resiliency, Mitigation and Climate Adaptation to investigate and present scalable strategies to address locally the adverse affects of Climate Change including initiatives to reduce carbon dioxide emissions, increase carbon sequestration and pursue renewable energy targets and energy independence, and

WHEREAS, as stated in **HR763 the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act**, a national, revenue-neutral carbon fee starting at a relatively low rate of \$15 per ton of CO₂ equivalent emissions and

resulting in equal charges per ton of CO2 equivalent emissions potential in each type of fuel or greenhouse gas should be assessed to begin to lower what are now dangerously high CO2 emissions. The yearly increase in carbon fees including other greenhouse gases, shall be at least \$10 per ton of CO2 equivalent each year, with the provision that the annual increase will be \$15 per ton of CO2 equivalent if statutory goals are not met; and

WHEREAS, the **Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act** specifies that, in order to protect low and middle income citizens from the economic impact of rising prices due to the carbon fee, equal monthly per-person dividend payments shall be made to all American households (one-half payment per child under 19 years old) each month from the fossil fuel fees collected. The total value of all monthly dividend payments shall represent 100% of the net carbon fees collected per month; and

WHEREAS, the **Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act** encourages market-driven innovation of clean energy technologies and market efficiencies which will reduce harmful pollution and leave a healthier, more stable, and more prosperous nation for future generations; and

WHEREAS, the **Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act** will, after 12 years, lead to a decrease in America's CO2 emissions of 40 percent and preserve national employment; and

WHEREAS, border adjustments - carbon content-based levies on products imported from countries without comparable carbon pricing, and refunds to our exporters of carbon fees paid - can maintain the competitiveness of U.S. businesses in global markets; and

WHEREAS, a national carbon fee can be implemented quickly and efficiently, and will respond to the urgency of the climate crisis because the federal government already has in place mechanisms, such as the Internal Revenue Service, needed to implement and enforce the fee, and already collects fees from fossil fuel producers and importers; and

WHEREAS, A national revenue-neutral carbon fee would make the United States a leader in mitigating climate change and in the clean energy technologies of the 21st century and would provide incentive to other countries to enact similar carbon fees, reducing global CO2 emissions without the need for complex international agreements, and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT:

RESOLVED, that the Common Council of the City of Appleton, Wisconsin, urges the United States Congress to enact without delay **HR763** the **Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act**, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City Manager or City Clerk, no later than 30 days after passage of this Resolution, shall transmit copies of this resolution to the President and Vice President of the United States, to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, to the Majority Leader of the Senate, to each U.S. Senator and Representative from the State of Wisconsin in the Congress of the United States, and to nearby city and county governments urging that they pass similar resolutions.