

Climate Action Resolution

June 20, 2017

WHEREAS, Arlington County desires to protect and enhance the quality of life for all those who live, work, learn and play in our community, as well as for our children and grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, there is scientific consensus regarding the reality of climate change and the recognition that human activity, especially the combustion of fossil fuels that create greenhouse gases, is a key driver of climate change; and

WHEREAS, climate change has been widely recognized by government, business, academic, and other community leaders as a worldwide threat with the potential to harm our economy, safety, public health, and quality of life; and

WHEREAS, Arlington County has adopted a Community Energy Plan as an element of its Comprehensive Plan which aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 75 percent by 2050, consistent with the goals of the Paris Agreement, and has already reduced greenhouse gas emissions by 18 percent between 2007 and 2015; and

WHEREAS, Arlington County is home to the largest net zero-energy elementary school in the United States, has a large and growing number of residents who have installed solar panels on their homes through the County's voluntary solar cooperative and/or earned Green Home Choice certification for constructing or renovating energy efficient homes; and

WHEREAS, over 16 million square feet of commercial and residential buildings in Arlington County have earned the ENERGY STAR distinction for exceptional energy performance, and over nine million square feet of commercial and residential buildings have achieved green building standards including energy performance tracking; and

WHEREAS, Arlington County aims to be the first Virginia locality to launch a Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy (C-PACE) program in 2017 to help commercial building owners improve their building's energy efficiency while adding value to their property; and

WHEREAS, Arlington County has strengthened our commitment to climate action by designating 100 percent of the revenues generated from the Residential Utility Tax to support achievement of the goals in our Community Energy Plan; and

WHEREAS, 195 countries, including the United States, vowed to address climate change in agreements reached in Paris in December 2015 (the "Paris Agreement"), the first global commitment to fight climate change; and

WHEREAS, President Donald Trump's announcement regarding withdrawal by the United States of America from the Paris Agreement undermines this critical global effort to confront one of the greatest challenges facing our community and communities all across the one planet we all share; and

WHEREAS, the absence of federal leadership only increases the importance of local leadership in avoiding the most dangerous and costly effects of climate change; and

WHEREAS, Arlington County is a signatory of the Global Covenant of Mayors for Energy and Climate, committing to track and reduce greenhouse gas emissions and plan for climate adaptation; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that Arlington County re-affirms its commitment to climate action and pledges to diligently continue implementation of our Community Energy Plan; and be it

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Arlington County supports the principles of the Paris Agreement and will continue to stand with cities, counties and other public and private sector partners throughout the world to advance action in accordance with the goals outlined in the Paris Agreement.