



KALAMAZOO COUNTY GOVERNMENT

In the Pursuit of Extraordinary Governance...

Kalamazoo County Board of Commissioners

A RESOLUTION TO DECLARE A CLIMATE EMERGENCY

WHEREAS, the consensus conclusion of scientific and policy assessments from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) calls for urgent and decisive actions by governments around the world to make "rapid, far-reaching and unprecedented changes in all aspects of society" in order to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius to avoid the most disastrous impacts; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Fourth National Climate Assessment detailed the massive threat that climate change poses to the American economy and underscored the need for emergency climate action at all levels of government; and

WHEREAS, the 2019 Assessment of the Impacts of Climate Change on the Great Lakes highlights the significant impacts in our unique backyard. Here in Kalamazoo County – and throughout southwestern Michigan - we are increasingly experiencing the predicted impacts of climate change, including flooding of streets and homes, power outages, and heat waves. Farmers cannot plant or delay planting due to flooded fields. Record low temperatures with snow and ice close schools and businesses. Moreover, these economic and environmental hardships disproportionately affect the most vulnerable residents of Kalamazoo County; and

WHEREAS, over 1,000 local governments in 18 countries have already signed emergency declarations; and

WHEREAS, hundreds of municipalities have pledged to adopt and uphold the 2016 Paris climate agreement, committing to: the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, and increase in investments in renewable energy and energy efficiency, creation of a clean energy economy, and building relationships to address climate change; and

WHEREAS, as exhibited by the recent flooding in Kalamazoo County, the global, national, and local effects of climate change threaten the 8 Areas of Focus as laid out in the County's Master Plan; and

WHEREAS, the County has moved forward with initiatives to ensure a sustainable future such as the Complete Streets policy, our Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) program, and our Sustainability Policy; and

WHEREAS, Kalamazoo County Government recently partnered on our first solar array at our Healy Street Facility to decrease our own carbon footprint while saving taxpayer money in decreased energy costs over time; and

WHEREAS, the Kalamazoo County Board of Commissioners recognizes the climate crisis in Southwest Michigan and promotes both local solutions and regional cooperation; and

WHEREAS, a formal Declaration of a Climate Emergency by the Kalamazoo County Board of Commissioners is the critical and courageous first step in laying the foundation to address the climate crisis. A formal declaration will provide the catalyst to mobilize residents, businesses, institutions, faith and community organizations to work together to prioritize the immediate reduction of CO2 emissions and support the City in current efforts to plan for community resilience and adaptation while keeping the concerns of vulnerable populations central to a just transition.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Kalamazoo County Board of Commissioners declares that a climate emergency threatens our citizens, county, region, state, and the natural world; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the intent of this declaration is to both affirm existing commitments and further support County staff in their current efforts to develop a climate action plan that recognizes the climate emergency and set aggressive measurable goals and effective implementation; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Kalamazoo County accepts a role of regional leadership, and as such will seek partnerships with other regional governments, businesses, community groups, educational and other anchor institutions to best utilize regional expertise and resources to meet shared goals; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Kalamazoo County will aggressively seek any available state, federal, and private funding for this effort and form alliances with other Michigan cities that have declared a climate emergency or have a written climate action plan to lobby for such funding; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Kalamazoo County underscores the need for full community participation, inclusion, and support for the climate mobilization effort; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Kalamazoo County commits to keeping the concerns of vulnerable communities central to a just transition and climate mobilization effort planning processes and to inviting and encouraging such communities to actively participate in order to advocate directly for their needs.

STATE OF MICHIGAN)
)SS
COUNTY OF KALAMAZOO)

I, Timothy A. Snow, County Clerk/Register, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true copy of a

Proclamation adopted by the Kalamazoo County Board of Commissioners at a regular session held on December 3, 2019.

Timothy A. Snow
County Clerk/Register