

MEMORANDUM

To: The Hon. David Kaptain, Mayor of the City of Elgin, and members of the Elgin City Council

From: Citizens seeking passage of a Resolution Declaring a Climate Emergency and Mobilization to Restore a Safe Climate

Date: April 27, 2020

Recently, members of our citizens' initiative were informed that Mayor Kaptain and the City Council require documentation supporting statements of fact set forth in the draft for the proposed Resolution Declaring a Climate Emergency, which the Elgin Sustainability Commission has submitted for your consideration. This memorandum is a response to that request.

The following is the portion of the proposed resolution stating findings of fact which support our request for a resolution. Each factual allegation is annotated with links to primary and secondary sources containing, or otherwise illustrating, the factual conclusions we are asking the Council to reach. The citations in this memorandum are not the only support available for the facts stated in the resolution. To include all known sources of scientific data supporting the terrible truth that we face an existential threat would be an enormous undertaking, both to assemble and to review. The documents cited below are, for the most part, reports prepared by federal government agencies and departments. We also include some fact-based articles discussing the information contained in those reports. To aid in your verification of the facts, each citation is preceded by a number. Digital links to all the documents we cite are listed, using the same numbering system, at the end of this memorandum. If you doubt the reliability of any of the publications we cite, please see the site's "about us" pages. We have taken care to cite only sources and articles that are not politically partisan and have high professional standards.

The Elgin City Council finds the following:

(a) A Climate Emergency exists that threatens the City of Elgin, the State of Illinois, the nation, humanity and the natural world.

5. House Congressional Resolution 52 (hereinafter, HR52), generally

1. IPCC Summary for Policymakers at A; The Paris Agreement, Art. 2

6. Report of the Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights at II and III

17. Bioscience article: *World Scientists Warn of a Climate Emergency*

(b) In April, 2016 world leaders recognized the urgent need to combat climate change by signing the Paris Agreement, agreeing to keep global warming, "well below 2 degrees Celcius above pre-industrial levels" and to "pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5 degrees Celcius."

4. Paris Agreement. Art. 2

1. IPCC Summary for Policymakers at A.3

5. HR 52, generally

(c) In 2017, the Mayor of Elgin, David Kaptain, signed a letter stating that the mayor, along with 220 other US mayors, will uphold the terms of the Paris Climate Accords in order to "build and strengthen relationships around the world to protect the planet from devastating climate risks."

See, City of Elgin records

(d) In October 2018 the United Nations released a special report which projected that limiting warming to even the dangerous 1.5 degrees Celcius target this century will require an unprecedented transformation of every sector on the global economy by 2030.

1. IPCC Summary for Policymakers at C, particularly C.2 and C.3

(e) In July 2019, members of the United States Congress introduced a concurrent Congressional resolution to declare a national Climate Emergency in the United States, calling for a "national, social, industrial and economic mobilization of the resources and labor of the United States at a massive scale to halt, reverse, mitigate and prepare for the consequences of the climate emergency and to restore the climate for future generations[.]"

5. HR 52, "Be It Resolved" Statements at (B)

(f) The suffering, death and destruction already wrought by current average global warming of 1 degree Celcius demonstrate that the Earth is already too hot for safety and justice, as attested by increased and intensifying wildfires, floods, rising seas, diseases, droughts and extreme weather.

1. IPCC Summary for Policymakers at A.3, Figure SPM.2

11. National Climate Assessment 2018, Summary Findings

8. CDC Office of Coastal Management "Fast Facts" Water Disasters and Severe Weather Events

6. Report of the Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights at II and III

17. Bioscience article: *World Scientists Warn of a Climate Emergency*;

18. The Guardian article: *We Have 12 Years to Limit Climate Change Catastrophe, Warns UN*

16. 2019 report from Center for Biological Diversity: *Blown Away*

(g) Climate change and the global economy's expansion beyond ecological limits are driving the Sixth Mass Extinction of species, causing a 60% decline in global wildlife populations since 1970.

13. World Wildlife Fund, Living Planet Report, 2018, page 9, "At a Glance," and Chapter 3, Living Planet Index

(h) According to the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty, 1.5 degrees Centigrade of global warming could expose 500 million people to water poverty [and] 36 million to food insecurity because of lower crop yields and 4.5 billion people to heat waves.

6. Report of the Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights at II and III; Summary for Policymakers at A.3, B.1-B.5]

(i) Climate change will continue to make basic human necessities such as food, housing, health care, transportation and energy more expensive and difficult to obtain.

6. Report of the Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights at III B

1. IPCC Summary for Policymakers at B.1-B.5

8. Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Climate Effects on Health

(j) Marginalized populations in cities like Elgin, the State of Illinois, the nation and worldwide, including people of color, immigrants, indigenous communities, low-income individuals and people with disabilities are already disproportionately affected by climate change and will continue to bear an excess burden as temperatures increase.

11. National Climate Assessment 2018, Summary Findings 1-3 and 5-10

1. IPCC Summary for Policymakers at B.5

15. Inside Climate News article: *Unfamiliar Ground: Bracing for Climate Impacts in the American Midwest*

(k) The United States of America, through in large part its historic use of carbon-producing fossil fuels, has disproportionately contributed to the climate and ecological emergencies and thus bears an extraordinary responsibility to rapidly address and solve these crises.

12. EPA Global Greenhouse Gas Emissions Data

1. IPCC Summary for Policymakers at A.1-A.3 and Figure SPM 1

21. New York Times article: *The US is the Biggest Carbon Polluter in History*, relying on data from the Carbon Dioxide Information Analysis Center

(l) Reversing biodiversity loss and restoring a safe and stable climate requires a Climate Mobilization, an emergency mobilization on a scale not seen since World War II, in order to reach zero greenhouse gas emissions across all sectors of the economy; to rapidly and safely drawdown and remove all the excess carbon from the atmosphere at emergency, wartime speed, and until safe, pre-industrial climate conditions are restored; and to implement measures to protect all people and species from the consequences of abrupt climate breakdown.

[See, citations listed under (m)]

(m) Such necessary measures to restore a safe climate include:

- (1) A rapid, just managed phase-out of fossil fuels.
- (2) Ending greenhouse emissions to establish a zero-emissions economy within ten years or less.
- (3) A widespread effort to safely drawdown excess carbon from the atmosphere.
- (4) A full transition to a regenerative agriculture system.
- (5) An end to the Sixth Mass Extinction through widespread conservation of ecosystems.

1. IPCC Summary for Policymakers at C, D and Figures SPM.3a and 4

8. CDC Climate-Ready States & Cities Initiative

11. National Climate Assessment 2018, Summary Findings at 4

15. Inside Climate News article: *Unfamiliar Ground: Bracing for Climate Impacts in the American Midwest* and IPCC:

20. Inside Climate News article: *Radical Energy Transformation Needed to Avoid 1.5 Degrees Global Warming*;

18. The Guardian article: *We Have 12 Years to Limit Climate Change Catastrophe, Warns UN*

17. Bioscience article: *World Scientists Warn of a Climate Emergency*]

(n) Building a society that is resilient to the current, expected and potential effects of climate change will protect health, lives, environments and economies. Resilience is best achieved by preparing for the most dramatic potential consequences of climate change.

(o) Justice demands climate policy that addresses the specific experiences, vulnerabilities and needs of the marginalized communities most affected by the effects of climate change and includes those communities as active participants in climate and ecological resilience planning, policy and actions.

(p) The massive scope and scale of action necessary to stabilize the climate and biosphere will require unprecedented levels of public awareness, engagement and deliberation to develop and implement effective, just and equitable policies to address the climate emergency.

(q) The City of Elgin, like the State of Illinois and the Midwest region, generally, already have endured the negative effects of climate change, such as extreme flooding and unseasonal severe weather. Such recurring atypical conditions will endanger food supplies, raise the cost of heat and fuel, increase poverty and homelessness, and exacerbate incidents of disease and health problems.

22. United States EPA article: *What Climate Change Means for Illinois*

23. State Climatologist Office for Illinois, web site (This official site should be of significant assistance to your review of the merit of our proposed resolution)

24. NOAA National Centers For Environmental Information State Climate Summaries, State of Illinois

25. National Geographic article: *Midwest Flooding is Drowning Soy and Corn Crops. Is Climate Change to Blame?*

(r) The City of Elgin should act as a global leader by initiating an Emergency Climate Mobilization and taking the steps necessary to convert our city to an ecologically, socially, and economically regenerative local economy at an appropriate emergency speed, while advocating and supporting regional, national and international efforts to reverse global warming and the ecological crisis.

In sum, we hope the resources we have gathered will aid in your determination whether declaration of a climate emergency is an appropriate action for our city to take. Please do not hesitate to contact us if there you have any questions or concerns that we have failed to address. We leave you with this observation by Dr. Jim Angel, Illinois State Climatologist:

"Climate change has become a major issue will have direct and indirect impacts on Illinois. We know the climate in Illinois has changed in the past due to natural forces such as changes in the amount of solar radiation, ocean circulation, volcanoes, etc. However, humans can impact climate on a local, regional, and global scale, through increases in greenhouse gasses, changing aerosols (small particles in the air such as dust or sulfates from coal burning), and land use changes (change from prairie to agriculture to cities). Therefore, climate change is the result of complex interactions between natural and human-induced forces.."

<https://stateclimatologist.web.illinois.edu/climate-of-illinois/climate-change-in-illinois/>

See complete list of digital links to sources below.

DIGITAL LINKS TO SOURCES REFERENCED ABOVE

Below are links to primary and secondary sources supporting statements of scientific fact and conclusion set forth in the Elgin City Council's proposed Resolution Declaring a Climate Emergency and Mobilization to Restore a Safe Climate. Not all of these sources are cited above. Many of the following sources are cited in House Resolution 52, now pending before the Federal House of Representatives. While, in the interest of brevity, not all are specifically cited above, all are pertinent to the matter before you and should aid in your decision-making process.

1. IPCC Summary For Policy Makers

<https://www.ipcc.ch/sr15/chapter/spm/>

2. Natural Resources Defense Council summary of Paris Agreement

<https://www.nrdc.org/stories/paris-climate-agreement-everything-you-need-know>

3. UN summary/explanation of Paris Agreement

<https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-paris-agreement/what-is-the-paris-agreement>

4. Paris Agreement, full text

https://unfccc.int/files/essential_background/convention/application/pdf/english_pari_s_agreement.pdf

5. H. CON. RES. 52, full text

<https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-concurrent-resolution/52/text>

6. Report of the Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights

https://srpovertyorg.files.wordpress.com/2019/06/unsr-poverty-climate-change-a_hrc_41_39.pdf

7. The Impacts of Climate Change on Human Health in the United States

A Scientific Assessment

Report Summary

<https://health2016.globalchange.gov/>

8. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: "Climate Effects on Health"

<https://www.cdc.gov/climateandhealth/effects/>

To inquire about how Elgin might benefit from the initiative, use the email address climateandhealth@cdc.gov

9. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. See “Climate Change Predictions” under the Fast Facts section
<https://www.noaa.gov/> and <https://coast.noaa.gov/>
10. National Climate Report
See the monthly reports, “Climate at a Glance” materials on temperature anomalies, and “Billion-Dollar Weather and Climate Disasters: Events, 1980-2020”
<https://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/>
11. National Climate Assessment
Global Change report
<https://nca2018.globalchange.gov/>
12. EPA Global Greenhouse Gas Emissions Data
<https://www.epa.gov/ghgemissions/global-greenhouse-gas-emissions-data>
13. World Wildlife Fund, Living Planet Report 2018 at 9, "At a Glance," and "Chapter 3, Living Planet Index."
https://c402277.ssl.cf1.rackcdn.com/publications/1187/files/original/LPR2018_Full_Report_Spreads.pdf?1540487589
14. Dr. Robert Bullard, “the father of environmental justice”
<https://drrobertbullard.com/>
15. Unfamiliar Ground: Bracing for Climate Impacts in the American Midwest
<https://insideclimatenews.org/news/11112019/midwest-climate-change-adaptation-city-leadership-flood-heat-risk-news-collaboration>
16. Blown Away
10 US Endangered Species Threatened by Climate-Fueled Storms
https://www.biologicaldiversity.org/programs/climate_law_institute/climate_change_is_here_now/pdfs/Blown-Away.pdf
17. World Scientists’ Warning of a Climate Emergency
<https://academic.oup.com/bioscience/article/70/1/8/5610806>
18. We Have 12 Years to Limit Climate Change Catastrophe, Warns UN
<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/oct/08/global-warming-must-not-exceed-15c-warns-landmark-un-report>

19. As Climate Change Threatens Midwest's Cultural Identity, Cities Test Ways to Adapt

<https://insideclimatenews.org/news/11112019/midwest-climate-change-evidence-science-cities-adapt-rochester-minnesota-flooding>

20. IPCC: Radical Energy Transformation Needed to Avoid 1.5 Degrees Global Warming

<https://insideclimatenews.org/news/07102018/ipcc-climate-change-science-report-data-carbon-emissions-heat-waves-extreme-weather-oil-gas-agriculture>

21. The US is the Biggest Carbon Polluter in History

<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/06/01/climate/us-biggest-carbon-polluter-in-history-will-it-walk-away-from-the-paris-climate-deal.html>

relying on,

Carbon Dioxide Information Analysis Center

https://cdiac.ess-dive.lbl.gov/trends/emis/meth_reg.html

22. United States Environmental Protection Agency article: *What Climate Change Means for Illinois*

<https://19january2017snapshot.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2016-09/documents/climate-change-il.pdf>

23. State Climatologist Office for Illinois

<https://stateclimatologist.web.illinois.edu/climate-of-illinois/climate-change-in-illinois/>

24. NOAA National Centers For Environmental Information
State Climate Summaries Illinois

<https://statesummaries.ncics.org/chapter/il/>

25. National Geographic article: *Midwest Flooding is Drowning Soy and Corn Crops. Is Climate Change to Blame?*

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/environment/2019/06/midwest-rain-climate-change-wrecking-corn-soy-crops/>

In addition to the above, we strongly recommend "library" portion of the The Climate Mobilization web site. The Climate Mobilization is a reliable source for information regarding the climate change crisis faced by humanity.

Climate Mobilization Library

<https://www.theclimatemobilization.org/documents-library>

