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COUNTY COUNCIL
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Director of Council Services
Traci N. T. Fujita, Esq.

December 3, 2019

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OFFICE OF THE COUNTY CLERK

Mr. Josiah K. Nishita, County Clerk
Office of the County Clerk
County of Maui
Wailuku, Hawaii 96793

Dear Mr. Nishita:

SUBJECT: **CLIMATE EMERGENCY RESOLUTION**
(PAF 19-354)

May I request the attached proposed resolution, entitled "ACKNOWLEDGING A CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND COMMITTING TO AN IMMEDIATE JUST TRANSITION AND EMERGENCY MOBILIZATION EFFORT TO RESTORE A SAFE CLIMATE," be placed on the next Council meeting agenda.

Sincerely,

Kelly T. King

KELLY T. KING
Council Chair

paf:lcjm:19-354b

Enclosure

COUNTY COMMUNICATION NO. 19-515

Resolution

No. _____

ACKNOWLEDGING A CLIMATE EMERGENCY
AND COMMITTING TO AN IMMEDIATE JUST
TRANSITION AND EMERGENCY MOBILIZATION
EFFORT TO RESTORE A SAFE CLIMATE

WHEREAS, the County of Maui's official policy is to "reduce Maui County's contribution to global climate change," as stated at page 48 of the Countywide Policy Plan, enacted by Ordinance 3732 on March 24, 2010;

WHEREAS, the statewide Climate Adaptation Policy, codified at Section 226-109, Hawai`i Revised Statutes, requires consideration of climate change in land-use, capital-improvement, and program decisions made by State agencies and all four counties; and

WHEREAS, on April 22, 2016, world leaders from 175 countries, including the United States, recognized the urgent need to combat climate change by signing the Paris Climate Accord, which set a goal of "holding the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C (3.6°F) above pre-industrial levels" and included an agreement to "pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C (2.7°F)"; and

WHEREAS, the October 8, 2018, a special report of the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change projected that curtailing warming to 1.5°C (2.7°F) to reduce the risks to health, livelihoods, food security, water supply, human security, economic growth, and plant and animal life this century will require an unprecedented transformation of every sector of the global economy over the next 12 years; and

WHEREAS, the special report said that stopping warming at the UN target of 1.5°C (2.7°F) can only be achieved by overshooting the target and reversing warming with negative emissions—removing carbon from the atmosphere; and

WHEREAS, subsequent peer-reviewed research has shown warming is likely to accelerate in the next decade and reach 1.5°C (2.7°F) by 2030—10 years earlier than initially projected by the IPCC—with further

projections of 2°C (3.6°F) warming by 2045 and up to 5°C (9.0°F) by the 2080s; and

WHEREAS, research indicates that even under moderate warming for Hawai`i, 10 of 21 existing native forest bird species are projected to lose over 50 percent of their range by 2100, with six species projected to lose 90 percent to 100 percent of their ranges, making them at high risk for extinction; and

WHEREAS, research also shows that ocean warming and acidification are projected to cause annual coral bleaching in some areas, like the central equatorial Pacific Ocean, as early as 2030 and in almost all reefs by 2050, which will not only devastate local coral-reef ecosystems, but will also have profound impacts on ocean systems in general, ultimately threatening the human communities and economies that depend on a healthy ocean; and

WHEREAS, on November 3, 2018, the United States Global Change Research Program, comprised of 13 Federal agencies, issued the Fourth National Climate Assessment detailing the massive threat that climate change poses to the American economy and underscoring the need for immediate emergency action by every level of government to reduce emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases; and

WHEREAS, the Fourth National Climate Assessment further indicated global warming of approximately 1.1°C (1.98°F) above late 19th century levels demonstrates the Earth is already too hot for humanity to safely and justly exist, as attested to by increased and intensifying wildfires, floods, rising seas, diseases, droughts, and extreme weather; and

WHEREAS, the number of weather disasters doubled between 1985 and 1994, and has increased 14 percent between 1995 and 2004; and

WHEREAS, the global occurrence of extreme rainfall has increased by 12 percent; and

WHEREAS, in Hawai`i, heavy rainfall events and droughts have become more common—increasing erosion, flooding, and water shortages; and

WHEREAS, estimates of future sea-level rise in Hawai`i and other Pacific Islands are about 20 percent to 30 percent higher than the global mean because of global-gravitational effects; and

WHEREAS, under high-emission scenarios, a sea-level rise exceeding 2.4 meters (eight feet) by 2100 is possible, and the nearly one meter (3.2 feet) of sea-level rise projected this century across the State will result in 3,130 acres of land experiencing chronic flooding, erosion, and high waves; and

WHEREAS, half of this threatened land is conservation area and over a third is urban-use area, and potential impacts include the loss of more than $3.2 billion in assets; and

WHEREAS, across the County of Maui, as many as 300 structures would be compromised or lost with 3.2 feet of sea-level rise, including hotels, shopping malls, and small businesses; and

WHEREAS, the loss of these structures may result in the interruption, relocation, or even closure of those businesses and more than 11 miles of major coastal roads would become impassible, jeopardizing critical access to and from many communities; and

WHEREAS, already, more than four miles of beaches have been lost to coastal erosion because of seawalls and other shoreline armoring; and

WHEREAS, ocean warming and acidification, sea-level rise and coastal erosion, drought, flooding, pollution, and overdevelopment are negatively affecting the livelihood and security of Pacific communities who rely on fisheries, forested ecosystems, and tourism—the leading economic sector in the County of Maui and State of Hawai`i; and

WHEREAS, the term "Just Transition" is a framework for a fair shift to an economy that is ecologically sustainable, equitable, and just for all its members; and

WHEREAS, Just Transition strategies were first forged by the BlueGreen Alliance of labor unions and environmental-justice groups that saw the need to phase out the industries that were harming workers, community health, and the planet, while also providing just pathways for workers into new livelihoods; and

WHEREAS, Just Transition initiatives shift the economy from dirty energy to energy democracy, from funding highways to expanding public transit, from incinerators and landfills to zero waste, from industrial food systems to food sovereignty, from car-dependent sprawl and unbridled growth to smart urban development without displacement, and from rampant, destructive overdevelopment to habitat and ecosystem restoration; and

WHEREAS, justice requires that communities that have historically borne the brunt of the extractive fossil-fuel economy participate actively in the planning and implementation of this mobilization effort at all levels of government and that they benefit first from the transition to a renewable energy economy. Fairness also demands a guarantee of high-paying, good-quality jobs with comprehensive benefits for all and many other tenets of a Green New Deal effort in conjunction with the mobilization to restore a safe climate; and

WHEREAS, the County of Maui has an opportunity to be a global leader by rapidly organizing a regional emergency climate mobilization effort and converting to an ecologically, socially, and economically regenerative economy at emergency speed, and by catalyzing a unified regional Just Transition and climate emergency mobilization effort this year; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the County of Maui:

1. That it acknowledges a climate emergency, which threatens humanity and the natural world;

2. That it, therefore, commits the County of Maui to implementing an immediate Just Transition and emergency mobilization effort to restore a safe climate, including work to drastically reduce countywide emissions of carbon dioxide and greenhouse gases and safely drawing down carbon from the atmosphere no later than 2030, while accelerating adaptation and resilience strategies in preparation for intensifying climate-change impacts; and

3. That it further commits the County of Maui to countywide action rooted in equity, self-determination, culture, tradition, and the belief that people locally and around the world have the right to clean, healthy, and adequate air, water, land, food, education, and shelter; and

4. That it further commits the County of Maui to revising its existing policies, priorities, processes, and use and distribution of resources to implement emergency climate mobilization efforts countywide, including the development of an environmentally preferable purchasing policy to guide efficient, consistent, and just action, to the furthest extent allowed by the Hawai`i Public Procurement Code and other law; and

5. That it further commits the County of Maui to establishing ambitious goals, consistent with or exceeding the requirements of the State of Hawai`i Climate Adaptation Policy; and

6. That certified copies of this resolution be transmitted to the Honorable Brian E. Schatz, United States Senator; the Honorable Mazie K. Hirono, United States Senator, the Honorable Tulsi Gabbard, Member of Congress: the Honorable Donald J. Trump, President of the United States; the Honorable Scott Saiki, Speaker of the House, State of Hawai`i; the Honorable Ronald Kouchi, Senate President, State of Hawai`i; the County's delegation to the State Legislature; the Honorable David Ige, Governor, State of Hawai`i; the Honorable Michael P. Victorino, Mayor, County of Maui; the Hawai`i Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission; and The Climate Reality Project—Hawai`i Chapter.

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