

RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_  
CONTRA COSTA COUNTY, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

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RESOLUTION ENDORSING THE DECLARATION OF A CLIMATE EMERGENCY IN  
CONTRA COSTA COUNTY THAT DEMANDS ACCELERATED ACTIONS ON THE  
CLIMATE CRISIS AND CALLS ON LOCAL AND REGIONAL PARTNERS TO JOIN  
TOGETHER TO ADDRESS CLIMATE CHANGE.

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**RESOLVED**, by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Contra Costa, State of California,  
that:

**WHEREAS**, according to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC),  
increasing emissions of greenhouse gases (GHG) will cause global temperatures to rise 1.5  
degrees Celsius by as early as 2030; and

**WHEREAS**, on June 24, 2019, more than 70 health organizations including the  
American Medical Association and the American Public Health Association declared climate  
change to be a health emergency and issued a call to action for government, business, and civil  
society leaders to recognize climate change as a health emergency; and

**WHEREAS**, California's Governor Gavin Newsom in Executive Order N-19-19 has  
committed state agencies to immediate and bold actions that reduce greenhouse gas emissions,  
curb the impacts from climate change, and develop a Climate Investment Framework; and

**WHEREAS**, the State of California has established goals to reduce greenhouse gas  
emissions 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030, provide 100 percent of the State's electricity  
from clean energy sources by 2045, reduce methane emissions and hydrofluorocarbon gases by  
40 percent, and add five million zero-emission vehicles to California's roads by 2030; and

**WHEREAS**, the State of California has recognized the need for careful study and  
planning to decrease demand and supply of fossil fuels, while managing the decline in a way that  
is economically responsible and sustainable; and

**WHEREAS**, for Contra Costa County, rising global temperatures will cause sea levels to  
rise (up to six feet or more by year 2100 under certain scenarios), contribute to increasingly  
extreme weather, including intense rainfall, storms, and heat events, and heightened risk of  
wildfires; and

**WHEREAS**, the consequences of climate change pose risks to life, safety and critical infrastructure in Contra Costa County and throughout the world, and threaten physical, social, and economic well-being; and

**WHEREAS**, climate change impacts in Contra Costa County will be most acutely felt by children, seniors, low income populations, communities of color, and residents with unstable economic or housing situations; and

**WHEREAS**, the Vulnerability Assessment developed for the Envision Contra Costa 2040 General Plan indicates that the most vulnerable County residents, including households in poverty, low-income households, and persons experiencing homelessness, are more likely to be severely impacted by a changing climate, including flooding, wildfires, extreme heat, and poor air quality; and

**WHEREAS**, the Vulnerability Assessment also indicates that there is severe vulnerability in the County's agriculture sector, industrial and manufacturing centers, including oil refineries, rangelands, and the Delta due to climate impacts, as well as infrastructure including major roads and highways, flood control, parks and open space, railroads and BART, and wastewater treatment plants and infrastructure; and

**WHEREAS**, fossil fuels are recognized as a primary contributor to the rapidly changing climate; and

**WHEREAS**, seven of the ten largest industrial pollution sources in the San Francisco Bay Area are located in Contra Costa County; and

**WHEREAS**, twenty-five census tracts in Contra Costa County are recognized by the State of California as being in the top twenty-five percent of "disadvantaged" or "frontline" communities that are disproportionately burdened by sources of pollution; and

**WHEREAS**, rates of asthma, obesity, and breast, colorectal, lung, and prostate cancer are higher in Contra Costa County than in the rest of California, and in some cases, the nation, particularly in census tracts that are located near large industrial facilities; and

**WHEREAS**, the world is facing an unprecedented crisis with the COVID-19 pandemic, which has swept across the world causing global human tragedy and an historical economic setback, forcing a rebuild of our economy and a need to introduce the necessary recovery plans to restore sustainable progress and prosperity to the citizens of Contra Costa; and

**WHEREAS**, long-term exposure to air pollution increases vulnerability to experiencing the most severe COVID-19 outcomes, further burdening the disproportionately affected communities that traditionally carry the brunt of the negative impacts of climate change, particularly in census tracts recognized as disadvantaged communities; and

**WHEREAS**, PBF Energy, which purchased the former Shell Martinez refinery in February 2020, on March 30, 2020, during a period of rapid decrease in fossil fuel usage announced that it plans to sell two hydrogen plants at the Martinez facility “as part of a strategic plan for PBF to navigate current extraordinary and volatile markets,” creating economic uncertainty for Contra Costa County; and

**WHEREAS**, the COVID-19 crisis could mark a turning point in progress on climate change and there will be a need for a resilient recovery after the pandemic, and Contra Costa County’s capacity to act depends largely on our ability to work together in solidarity to build the bridge between fighting Covid-19, biodiversity loss, and climate change; and

**WHEREAS**, the County has taken a number of actions to address climate change, some of which include: adopting and implementing the 2015 Climate Action Plan; selecting MCE as the electricity provider for unincorporated Contra Costa County, in large part because of the higher clean energy content MCE offers; investing in clean energy, efficient building technologies, and alternative fuels for County operations; providing opportunities to generate more clean energy in Contra Costa County; developing an electric vehicle readiness blueprint; providing energy efficiency programs to County residents; increasing composting and recycling in County facilities; and

**WHEREAS**, the current pace of climate actions may still fall short of reducing the projected harm to people and places and accelerated actions need to be taken to reduce our GHG emissions and implement solutions to prepare and protect our communities; and

**WHEREAS**, by declaring a climate emergency, Contra Costa County will join the over 1,000 national, international and local jurisdictions, including many in the Bay Area, that have made similar declarations that commit to reducing GHG emissions and planning for climate change; and

**WHEREAS**, the County invites all Contra Costa cities and agencies to also approve a Climate Emergency Declaration to create a unified Countywide voice around climate change and

to strengthen the call for state and federal actions and funds to address the economic, social, public health, and national security threats posed by the climate crisis.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board of Supervisors of the County of Contra Costa declares a climate emergency that threatens the long-term economic and social well-being, health, safety, and security of the County.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the County Department of Conservation and Development work with the County Administrator and other departments to establish an interdepartmental task force of Department heads, or their immediate deputies, that will focus on implementing the County's Climate Action Plan and identifying additional actions, policies, and programs the County can undertake to reduce and adapt to the impacts of a changing climate.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the County Sustainability Commission seek input from the community to help the County anticipate and plan for an economy that is less dependent on fossil fuels, helps plan for a transition from a fossil-fuel dependent economy, and considers how the County's recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic can incorporate the County's climate goals. As the State of California adopts policies and goals for reducing pollution and addressing climate change, the County will consider with the assistance of the Sustainability Commission what this will mean for County revenues, jobs, health, and infrastructure including new opportunities and how frontline communities will realize economic and other benefits. The Commission will include this topic in its ongoing advice to the Board of Supervisors.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that health, socio-economic, and racial equity considerations should be included in policymaking and climate solutions at all levels and across all sectors as the consequences of climate change have significant impacts on all County residents, especially the young, the elderly, low-income or communities of color, and other vulnerable populations.