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Res. No. 926

Resolution declaring that the City of New York, in order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to a changing climate, adopts the New York State Climate Smart Communities pledge.

By The Speaker (Council Member Adams) and Council Members Gennaro, Nurse, Louis, Ung, Cabán, Hanif, Farías, Gutiérrez, Rivera, Bottcher and Menin

Whereas, According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the United Nations body tasked with assessing climate data, significant reductions in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions will be required by the middle of the twenty-first century to limit the global average temperature increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius, and no more than 2 degrees Celsius, to minimize the worst impacts of climate change; and

Whereas, The City of New York (NYC or City) believes that climate change poses a real and increasing threat to the local and global environments and is primarily due to emissions associated with the burning of fossil fuels; and

Whereas, According to the NYC Greenhouse Gas Inventory, in 2023, more than 70 percent of NYC's carbon emissions came from the combustion of fossil fuels to heat, cool, and power buildings; and

Whereas, As a coastal city with over 500 miles of waterfront, NYC is particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change, such as more frequent and intense storms, flooding, sea level rise, and heat waves; and

Whereas, According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency, the effects of climate change are often inequitably distributed, with socially vulnerable groups, which may include communities of color, children, older people, and low income populations, who may be at greater risk because of a lack of access to the financial and community resources required to adequately respond to weather-related disasters,

more likely to experience the harmful effects; and

Whereas, The effects of climate change threaten to endanger the infrastructure, economy, and livelihoods of the City and its residents, potentially harming farms, orchards, and ecological communities, including native fish and wildlife populations statewide, spreading invasive species and exotic diseases, and reducing drinking water supplies and recreational opportunities for all New Yorkers; and

Whereas, The City's response to climate change provides an unprecedented opportunity to save money, and to build livable, energy-independent and secure communities, vibrant innovation economies, healthy and safe schools, and resilient infrastructures; and

Whereas, The scale of GHG emissions reductions required for climate stabilization will require sustained and substantial efforts; and

Whereas, Even if emissions were dramatically reduced today, communities would still be required to adapt to the effects of climate change for decades to come; now, therefore be it

Resolved, That the City of New York, in order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to a changing climate, adopts the New York State Climate Smart Communities pledge, which comprises the following 10 elements:

1) Build a climate-smart community.

2) Inventory emissions, set goals, and plan for climate action.

3) Decrease energy use.

4) Shift to clean, renewable energy.

5) Use climate-smart materials management.

6) Implement climate-smart land use.

7) Enhance community resilience to climate change.

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8) Support a green innovation economy.

9) Inform and inspire the public.

10) Engage in an evolving process of climate action.

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