

Legislation Text

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Urging the City of Philadelphia to take measures to achieve fair and equitable transition to the use of 100% Clean Renewable Energy by 2050.

WHEREAS, Per Resolution 181066 introduced by Councilwoman Blondell Reynolds Brown, the 2018 National Climate Assessment maintains that we still have the capacity to limit the effects of climate change. To do so, awareness of climate change must extend to all levels of government. The City of Philadelphia must continue to take the lead in advancing proactive climate change solutions, a number of which are already in development thanks to unprecedented efforts by the Office of Sustainability, the Philadelphia Energy Authority, and various City agencies and departments; and

WHEREAS, According to the Office of Sustainability's "Clean Energy Vision Plan" since 2006 carbon emissions from City-owned and -operated buildings and streetlights have decreased by more than 26 percent. The City of Philadelphia will deepen this progress and demonstrate leadership in climate action by implementing its Energy Master Plan to reduce energy consumption and carbon emissions from City-owned buildings; and

WHEREAS, Mayor James F. Kenney has committed to reducing the City of Philadelphia's carbon footprint by 80% before the year 2050; and has pledged support for the City of Philadelphia to transition its energy to 100% clean renewable energy through the "Mayors for 100% Clean Energy" in June 2017; and

WHEREAS, The City of Philadelphia has committed to "doing its part to meet the obligations of the United States under the Paris Accord to limit global warming to 1.5⁰ C above pre-industrial levels" per resolution number 170706 signed in September 2017; and

WHEREAS, The City of Philadelphia has committees to reducing its per capita energy consumption through increased efficiency; and

WHEREAS, The City of Philadelphia is obligated to take actions in accordance with Article 1 Section 27 of the Pennsylvania State Constitution, ensuring the people of Pennsylvania "a right to clean air, pure water, and the preservation of the natural, scenic, historic, and esthetic values of the environment"; and

WHEREAS, The City of Philadelphia has passed legislation to adopt the 2018 International Building Code for commercial construction; and

WHEREAS, The Philadelphia Office of Sustainability has issued a Municipal Energy Master Plan that sets a goal of achieving 100% renewable electricity for municipal buildings by 2030; and

WHEREAS, The Philadelphia Office of Sustainability, has issued Powering Our Future: A Clean Energy Vision for Philadelphia, outlining ways to achieve 80% carbon emissions reduction in the built environment by 2050; and

WHEREAS, Other cities in the US (over 130 to date) have adopted goals to transition to 100% renewable

energy, including Chicago, Los Angeles, Atlanta, Denver, Orlando, St. Louis, San Diego, Portland, San Francisco, Minneapolis, Cleveland, and Cincinnati, and over 20 Philadelphia suburban towns; and

WHEREAS, The City of Philadelphia understands its role in a clean energy transition process is to recognize and prioritize the addressing of existing inequities in Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, “Renewable Energy” is energy that is generated from the natural processes that are replenished within a human lifespan; and “Clean Renewable Energy” includes energy derives from solar, wind, and geothermal; but does not include natural gas; and “Renewable Energy” specifically excludes energy derived from fossil fuels; and

WHEREAS, Low-impact, small hydro and some forms of biomass may be considered “renewable energy” after being evaluated for sustainability and environmental justice implications; and

WHEREAS, “Energy Storage” includes technology that is capable of absorbing energy, storing it for a period of time, and thereafter dispatching the energy into the electric grid and/or facilitating services for solar and wind energy, demand-response, load-leveling, and frequency regulation; and

WHEREAS, Residents, businesses and institutions should prioritize regionally generated renewable energy over the purchase of Renewable Energy Credits (RECs) from states other than the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania during the transition to 100% renewable resources; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, The City of Philadelphia shall appoint Philadelphia Gas Commission members who support and advocate for clean renewable energy in PGW’s operations.

RESOLVED, The City of Philadelphia shall continually publicly report its progress towards meeting the community-wide goals, creating pathways to become a carbon-neutral or a “carbon sink” within new budget allocation investments in order to achieve the departments and resolutions goals.

RESOLVED, The public will have opportunities and be encouraged to participate in the process for planning and implementation.

RESOLVED, The City Council commits to allocating appropriate resources to ensure that the goals of this resolution are achieved beyond Mayor Kenney’s administration until its goals are achieved.

RESOLVED, That the City of Philadelphia shall take measures to achieve a fair and equitable transition to the use of 100% clean renewable energy for electricity in municipal operations by 2030, for electricity City-wide by 2035, and for all energy (including heat and transportation) city-wide by 2050 or sooner.