



**ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA RESOLUTION TO THE ADMINISTRATOR OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY IN SUPPORT OF REDUCING GREENHOUSE GAS POLLUTION UNDER THE CLEAN AIR ACT**

**ADOPTED BY THE ARLINGTON COUNTY BOARD – SEPTEMBER 24, 2013**

**WHEREAS**, climate change represents a clear and urgent threat to the environmental, economic and public health of Arlington County, the National Capital Region, the Commonwealth of Virginia, the United States and the world; and

**WHEREAS**, carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) is a primary greenhouse gas and CO<sub>2</sub> levels in the atmosphere have been steadily rising and reached record levels in 2013; and

**WHEREAS**, the Environmental Protection Agency determined in December 2009 that current and projected greenhouse gas (GHG) concentrations in the atmosphere threaten the public health and welfare of current and future generations; and

**WHEREAS**, according to a 2012 U.S. Geological Survey report, global sea level is rising 60 percent faster than projected by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the U.S. East Coast is a hotspot for sea level rise with rates three to four times faster than the global average, and if the sea level rise continues at its current pace, millions of Americans will be threatened with severe flooding; and

**WHEREAS**, local governments play a vital role in combatting climate change through our primary jurisdiction over land use planning, site plans and zoning, wastewater and solid waste management, open space preservation, and as the provider of transit services in our communities; and

**WHEREAS**, Arlington County and the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments have been established leaders in the fight against climate change at the local and regional levels; and

**WHEREAS**, Arlington County has combatted climate change using smart growth principles in its land use and transportation planning efforts and addressing greenhouse gas emissions through the Arlington Initiative to Rethink Energy (AIRE); and

**WHEREAS**, in June 2013 the Arlington County Board adopted a Community Energy Plan (CEP) as a new element of the County's Comprehensive Plan, where the CEP targets a reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, as a proxy for energy productivity, to 3.0 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent per resident per year by 2050; and

**WHEREAS**, the Arlington County CEP strives to have everyone in the community make energy decisions keeping in mind economic competitiveness, energy resiliency and sustainability, and a commitment to the environment; and

**WHEREAS**, a true and lasting solution to the threats of climate change cannot be accomplished without strong, coordinated national leadership and action by the federal government; and

**WHEREAS**, for four decades, the Clean Air Act has protected the air we breathe through a proven, comprehensive, successful system of pollution control that saves lives and creates economic benefits; and

**WHEREAS**, between 1970 and 1990, the six main pollutants covered by the Clean Air Act — particulate matter and ground-level ozone (both of which contribute to smog and asthma), carbon monoxide, lead, sulfur and nitrogen oxides (the pollutants that cause acid rain) — were reduced by between 47 percent and 93 percent, and airborne lead was virtually eliminated; and

**WHEREAS**, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in Massachusetts vs. EPA (2007) that greenhouse gases are “air pollutants” as defined by the Clean Air Act and the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that climate change affects everyone, but we can reduce the risks we face from climate change; and we, the County Board, on behalf of the residents and businesses of Arlington, do hereby urge the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency and President Barack Obama to move swiftly to fully employ and enforce the Clean Air Act to do our part to reduce carbon in our atmosphere as quickly as possible.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the County Clerk shall forward a copy of this resolution to the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency and President Barack Obama.