RESOLUTION NO. 2013-

RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF BROWARD COUNTY, FLORIDA, URGING PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA AND THE UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY ADMINISTRATOR TO REDUCE CARBON DIOXIDE AND OTHER GREENHOUSE GAS POLLUTION PURUSANT TO THE CLEAN AIR ACT, AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

(Sponsored by Mayor Kristin Jacobs)

WHEREAS, the decade from 2000 to 2010 was the warmest on record, and 2005 and 2010 tied for the hottest years on record; and

WHEREAS, one of the world's leading climate scientists, Dr. James Hansen, stated in 2008: "If humanity wishes to preserve a planet similar to that on which civilization developed and to which life on Earth is adapted, paleoclimate evidence and climate change suggest that Carbon Dioxide ("CO₂") will need to be reduced from its current 385 ppm to at most 350 ppm;" and

WHEREAS, the current level of CO₂ in the atmosphere is approximately 392 parts per million ("ppm"); and

WHEREAS, the United States Environmental Protection Agency ("EPA") determined that current and future greenhouse gas concentrations endanger public health, and, according to the Global Humanitarian Forum, climate change is already responsible every year for some 300,000 deaths, 325 million people seriously affected, and economic losses worldwide of $125 billion; and

WHEREAS, extreme weather events, most notably heat waves and precipitation extremes, are striking with increased frequency and with deadly consequences for people and wildlife. In the United States during 2011 alone, a record fourteen (14)
weather and climate disasters occurred, including droughts, heat waves, and floods, that cost at least $1 billion each in damages and loss of human lives; and

WHEREAS, climate change is affecting food security by negatively impacting the growth and yields of important crops; and

WHEREAS, droughts, floods, and changes in snowpack are altering water supplies; and

WHEREAS, scientists have concluded that by 2100 as many as one (1) in ten (10) species may be on the verge of extinction due to climate change; and

WHEREAS, the world’s land-based ice is rapidly melting, threatening water supplies in many regions and raising sea levels, and Arctic summer sea ice extent has decreased to about half what it was several decades ago, with an accompanying drastic reduction in sea-ice thickness and volume, which is severely jeopardizing ice-dependent animals; and

WHEREAS, sea level is rising faster along the United States East Coast than it has for at least the past 2,000 years, is accelerating in pace, and could rise by one (1) to two (2) meters in this century, threatening millions of Americans with severe flooding; and

WHEREAS, for over four (4) 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 exceeding its costs by many times; and

WHEREAS, due to the Clean Air Act, air quality in this country has improved significantly since 1970, despite major growth in both our economy and industrial production; and
WHEREAS, between 1970 and 1990, the six (6) 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 forty-seven percent (47%) and ninety-three percent (93%), and airborne lead was virtually eliminated; and

WHEREAS, the Clean Air Act has produced economic benefits valued at $2 trillion or thirty (30) times the cost of regulation; and

WHEREAS, the United States Supreme Court ruled in Massachusetts vs. Environmental Protection Agency, 549 U.S. 497 (2007), that greenhouse gases are "air pollutants" as defined by the Clean Air Act and the EPA has the authority to regulate them; and

WHEREAS, Broward County prides itself on being a leader in the fight against climate change and for clean air, consistent with the County Charter's guarantee of a sustainable environment for its citizens and demonstrated by the creation of the Broward County Climate Change Task Force in 2008, adoption of the Broward County Climate Change Action Plan in 2010, support for and participation in the Southeast Florida Regional Climate Compact beginning in 2009, and the adoption of the Southeast Florida Regional Climate Action Plan in October 2012, among many other actions;

NOW THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF BROWARD COUNTY, FLORIDA:
Section 1. The Board of County Commissioners of Broward County, Florida, on behalf of the nearly 1.8 million residents of Broward County, hereby urges President Barack Obama and the Administrator of the EPA to move swiftly to fully employ and enforce the Clean Air Act to reduce carbon dioxide levels in our atmosphere to no more than 350 parts per million and to reduce atmospheric levels of other greenhouse gases.

Section 2. The Board directs the County Administrator to provide a copy of this resolution to President Barack Obama and the Administrator of the EPA.

Section 3. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This Resolution shall become effective upon adoption.

ADOPTED this __________ day __________, 2013.