

## RESOLUTION

**By:** Mr. Smith

**Re:** Support Reducing Greenhouse Gas Pollution Under the Clean Air Act

**Date:** April 30, 2013

**Whereas:** The decade from 2000 to 2010 was the warmest on record. According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), 2005 and 2010 tied for the hottest years on record, while January through September 2012 were the warmest first nine months of any year on record for the contiguous US; and

**Whereas:** The current level of CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere is approximately 392 parts per million (ppm) according to NOAA; and

**Whereas:** In 2008, one of the world's leading climate scientists, Dr. James Hansen stated: "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 CO<sub>2</sub> will need to be reduced to 350 ppm or lower; and

**Whereas:** The Environmental Protection Agency determined that current and future greenhouse gas concentrations endanger public health. According to the Global Humanitarian Forum, climate change is already responsible for some 300,000 deaths, seriously affecting 325 million people, and economic losses worldwide of US \$125 billion; and

**Whereas:** Extreme weather events, most notably heat waves and precipitation extremes, are striking with increased frequency, with deadly consequences for people and wildlife. In the United States alone, a record 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 as crop growth and yields diminish and droughts, floods and changes in snowpack depth are disrupting water supplies; and

**Whereas:** Scientists have concluded that by 2011 as many as 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. Arctic summer ice extent has been decreased to about half of what it was several decades ago with an accompanying drastic reduction in sea-ice thickness and volume, which is severely jeopardizing ice-dependent animals like polar bears; and

**Whereas:** The sea level is rising faster along the East Coast than it has for at least 2,000 years. This is accelerating in pace and could rise by one to three feet before the end of this century, threatening millions of Americans with severe flooding; and

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- Whereas:** For four decades, the Clean Air Act has protected the air we breathe through a proven, comprehensive and successful system of pollution control that saves lives and creates economic benefits exceeding its costs by many times; and
- Whereas:** With the Clean Air Act, air quality in this country has improved significantly since 1970, despite major growth both in our economy and industrial pollution; 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% and 93%, and airborne lead was virtually eliminated; and
- Whereas:** The US 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; and
- Whereas:** The City of Buffalo prides itself on being a leader in the fight for clean air. The Common Council has passed resolutions calling for clean air for all residents in Buffalo in 2012 and has supported the residents living near the Peace Bridge by calling on the Peace Bridge Authority to enforce no idling of trucks and to establish pollution control measures along the United States Canadian border to protect residents living near the border;

**Therefore Be It Resolved:**

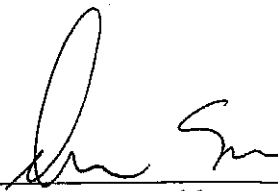
That Climate change is not a problem for the future or one that will affect only far distant places. Climate change is happening now and we are contributing to it. The longer we wait to act, the more difficult and more expensive the problem will be to solve; and

**Therefore Be It Further Resolved:**

That the Common Council, on behalf of the residents of Buffalo, urges the Environmental Protection Agency to move swiftly to fully employ and enforce the Clean Air Act to do their part to reduce carbon in our atmosphere to 350 parts per million or less; and

**Therefore Be It Finally Resolved:**

That copies of this resolution be sent to the Administrator of the EPA, the Clean Air Coalition, the Western New York State delegation of the Assembly and Senate, New York State Senator's Schumer and Gillibrand and President Barack Obama for their comments.

  
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