



COUNCIL RESOLUTION NO. 5265

**A RESOLUTION CALLING FOR SUPPORT OF THE JULIANA V. U.S.
YOUTH PLAINTIFFS AND THE SCIENCE-BASED NATIONAL
CLIMATE RECOVERY PLAN THEY SEEK.**

PASSED: 7:1

REJECTED:

OPPOSED: Clark

ABSENT:

CONSIDERED: May 20, 2019

EFFECTIVE DATE: Immediate



RESOLUTION NO. 5265

A RESOLUTION CALLING FOR SUPPORT OF THE *JULIANA V. U.S. YOUTH PLAINTIFFS* AND THE SCIENCE-BASED NATIONAL CLIMATE RECOVERY PLAN THEY SEEK.

The City Council of the City of Eugene finds that:

- A.** There is a broad scientific consensus among climate scientists that human activities, contributing to increases in greenhouse gas emissions, are the dominant cause of climate change.
- B.** Mean global temperature is increasing as a result of increased atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases, primarily carbon dioxide (CO₂), emitted from human activities, including burning fossil fuels; and the decade from 2000 to 2010 was the warmest on record; and if trends continue 2019 will join 2018, 2017, 2016 and 2015 in being the hottest years on record.
- C.** CO₂ levels in the atmosphere have surpassed 400 parts per million (ppm) for the first time in 3,000,000 years, with a global annual mean of 408.5 ppm in 2018.
- D.** The last time CO₂ levels were as high as they are today the seas were approximately 65 feet higher and Greenland was ice-free.
- E.** Emissions of greenhouse gases and especially CO₂ are already causing large-scale planetary changes including ocean acidification, ocean warming, and warming of the Earth's surface, which lead to rising seas, more frequent and severe extreme weather events, heat waves and drought, intense and destructive wildfires, disrupted ecosystems and agriculture, more disease, famine, and conflict and human loss of life, all of which have devastating impacts on physical, emotional and psychological wellbeing.
- F.** The impacts of climate change will worsen as greenhouse gases are emitted into the atmosphere and accumulate over the coming decades, and will profoundly impact the youngest generation throughout their lives, as well as the lives of future generations.
- G.** *The Fourth Oregon Climate Assessment Report*, issued by Oregon Climate Change Research Institute in 2018 (OCCRI Report), found that the threat posed by climate change is real and Oregon's climate is projected to warm on average 3–7°F by the 2050s and 5–11°F by the 2080s.
- H.** The OCCRI Report warns that the health of Oregonians is threatened, as more frequent heat waves are expected to increase heat-related illness and death; more frequent wildfires and poor air quality are expected to increase respiratory illnesses; warmth and extreme precipitation are expected to increase the risk of exposure to some vector- and water-borne diseases; access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food may be jeopardized.

I. Specific to the Willamette Valley, including the City of Eugene, the most densely populated and fastest-growing region in Oregon, greater risks of extreme heat events, summer water scarcity, poor air quality and, according to the Fourth National Climate Assessment, a significant influx of climate refugees from other parts of the U.S. are expected.

J. The scientific prescription for avoiding the worst effects of climate change requires returning atmospheric levels of CO₂ to 350 ppm by the year 2100, requiring a 96% reduction in fossil fuel emissions by 2050, in addition to significant increases in natural carbon sequestration through reforestation and soil management changes.

K. If emission reductions are delayed, it will make it difficult or impossible to meet a safe target; thus, urgent and substantial reductions in CO₂ emissions are critical.

L. Cities have a duty to current and future generations to protect our climate system and take science-based action on climate change.

M. The City of Eugene amended its Climate Recovery Ordinance in 2016 to establish a community CO₂ emissions reduction target in line with the 350 ppm by the year 2100 trajectory.

N. In a landmark constitutional climate case called *Juliana v. U.S.*, twenty-one youth, **including six Eugenians**, filed a lawsuit against the executive branch of the United States government for its role in perpetuating climate disruption, alleging violation of the youths' and future generations' rights to life, liberty and property, and equal protection under the law, while also failing to protect essential public resources.

O. If the *Juliana* youth plaintiffs are successful in their case, the federal government likely will be ordered to create and implement a science-based national Climate Recovery Plan designed to phase out the United States' fossil fuel energy system and emissions and draw down excess atmospheric CO₂ in line with the 350 ppm by 2100 prescription, thus enhancing Eugene's efforts to get off of fossil fuels and **providing us an opportunity to avoid the worst of the predicted climate impacts**, stabilize the climate system for current and future generations, protect our communities from fossil fuel pollution, and protect vital natural resources for all.

P. On November 10, 2016, U.S. District Judge Ann Aiken found that "the right to a climate system capable of sustaining human life is fundamental to a free and ordered society," thus allowing the *Juliana v. U.S.* case to move toward trial.

Q. **The *Juliana v. U.S.* case will be heard on June 4, 2019 by a three-judge panel in the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals through a process called interlocutory appeal**, now is the time for cities to speak out in solidarity.

R. The voice of the City of Eugene on behalf of its citizens is critically needed, as we envision a society free of fossil fuels and thereby free of the physical, emotional and psychological impacts of climate change on residents of Eugene.

NOW, THEREFORE,

**BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EUGENE, a
Municipal Corporation of the State of Oregon, as follows:**

Section 1. The City of Eugene supports the 21 *Juliana v. U.S.* youth plaintiffs and Climate Recovery Plan they seek.


Section 2. The City of Eugene recognizes the need for all emissions reduction targets to be based in science.

Section 3. The City Council encourages people to attend events held in support of the *Juliana v. U.S.*

Section 4. The City of Eugene directs the City Manager to transmit official copies of this resolution to the following Oregon cities and counties: City of Ashland, City of Corvallis, City of Milwaukie, City of Portland, City of Salem; Benton County, Clackamas County, Columbia County, Deschutes County, Lane County, Linn County, Marion County, Multnomah County, Washington County and Yamhill County.

Section 5. This Resolution is effective immediately upon its passage by the City Council.

The foregoing Resolution adopted the 20th day of May, 2019.



Deputy City Recorder