



Legislation Text

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The official copy considered by the City Council is the first reader copy.

Introductory*

City of Baltimore Council Bill R (Resolution)

Introduced by: Councilmember Conway

A Resolution Entitled

A Council Resolution concerning Global Warming Solutions - Carbon Neutral City

For the purpose of calling on the Mayor, the Baltimore City Council, the Baltimore City Administrator, the Baltimore Office of Sustainability, and the Baltimore Commission on Sustainability to take all necessary actions to make Baltimore a carbon neutral city by 2050.

Recitals

Baltimore City is responsible for promoting the public health and safety of its residents, including ensuring citizens have access to clean air, clean water, and a livable environment.

The International Energy Agency's 2021 Global Energy Review estimates that carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions will increase by almost 5% this year to 33 billion metric tons, based on the latest national data from around the world, as well as real-time analysis of economic growth trends and new energy projects that are set to begin operations. This is the second-largest increase in history - reversing most of the decline caused by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. The key driver of this increase is coal demand, which is set to grow by 4.5%, surpassing its 2019 level and approaching its all-time peak from 2014. The electricity sector accounts for three-quarters of this increase.

In 2017, Baltimore was responsible for the emission of 7,487,000 metric tons carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂ eq). The stationary energy sector contributes 72% of Baltimore's total emissions, while 25% are from transportation within Baltimore, and 3% of emissions are generated by waste management.

On April 22, 2019, the Mayor signed The 2019 Baltimore Sustainability Plan. The Plan is composed of recommended strategies to meet Baltimore's goal to mitigate global climate change. In the Plan, Baltimore committed to achieving reductions in greenhouse gas emissions similar to goals set by the Paris Climate Agreement; including a 25% reduction by 2020 and a 30% by 2025 (relative to 2007). Despite this goal, in comparison to the 2007 baseline established by the Baltimore Office of Sustainability (8,570,000 metric tons CO₂ eq), emissions in Baltimore have only reduced by 13%.

While the rise of global emissions are a serious threat to all, adverse effects from a changing atmosphere can compound existing poverty in a city like Baltimore, where almost 35% of households earn less than \$25,000 annually. The city's initiative to reduce greenhouse gases can alleviate health burdens made worse by pollutants, and reduce added stressors that greatly impact residents in neighborhoods with concentrated poverty.

While it is possible for cities to achieve their interim carbon reduction targets through incremental improvements to existing systems, achieving carbon neutrality requires robust, transformative changes to core city systems.

Baltimore cannot wait. The costs of delay are too great. Our City is resolved to act now. Climate change threatens our City, as it does the world. Baltimore must become a Carbon Neutral City.

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the City Council of Baltimore, That the City Council calls on the Mayor, the Baltimore City Administrator, the Baltimore Office of Sustainability, and the Baltimore Commission on Sustainability to take all necessary actions to make Baltimore a carbon neutral city by 2050.

And be it further resolved, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor, the Baltimore City Administrator, the Director of the Baltimore Office of Sustainability, the Baltimore Commission on Sustainability, and the Mayor's Legislative Liaison to the City Council.