

**NLC RESOLUTION #9****SUPPORTING AND ADVANCING RESILIENT COMMUNITIES TO PREPARE FOR CHANGING CLIMATE AND EXTREME WEATHER EVENTS**

**WHEREAS**, across the country local governments are seeing the devastating effects associated with a changing climate and recent extreme weather events, such as heat waves, droughts, heavy downpours, floods, hurricanes, and changes in other storms have brought renewed attention to the need for cities to anticipate, prepare for and adapt to these events; and

**WHEREAS**, these challenges are larger than individual communities can address on their own, making it beneficial to coordinate regionally and across levels of government; and

**WHEREAS**, while all regions of the country are impacted by climate change, approximately one third of the U.S. population—more than 100 million people—live in coastal communities that are threatened by rising sea levels, which could impact economic development, land availability, property values, insurance rates, beaches and tourism, and critical water, transportation and energy infrastructure; and

**WHEREAS**, the 2014 National Climate Assessment reports that current evidence of climate change appears in every region and impacts are currently visible in every state, and concludes that the evidence of human-induced climate change continues to strengthen;<sup>1</sup> and

**WHEREAS**, the effects of a changing climate are a national security issue with potential impacts to the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) missions, operations plans and installations and the DoD must be able to adapt to current and future operations to address the impacts of a variety of threats and conditions, including those from weather and natural events<sup>2</sup>; and

**WHEREAS**, a report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change indicates that limiting global warming to 1.5° C is necessary to avoid the worst impacts of climate change;<sup>3</sup> and

**WHEREAS**, climate change and extreme weather events can have severe impacts on local and regional infrastructure, economies, public safety, national security, public health, population migration, natural landscapes, water resources, and environmental quality; and

**WHEREAS**, the impacts of climate change and extreme weather events pose an especially pressing threat to persons with disabilities, economically disadvantaged households, the elderly and other vulnerable populations; and

**WHEREAS**, the capability of maintaining energy availability is a critical first order priority in maintaining critical infrastructure and building community resilience; and

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<sup>1</sup> National Climate Assessment (May 2014), *available at*: <http://nca2014.globalchange.gov/>

<sup>2</sup> Report on Effects of a Changing Climate to the Department of Defense, Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment (Jan. 2019), *available at*: [https://partner-mco-archive.s3.amazonaws.com/client\\_files/1547826612.pdf](https://partner-mco-archive.s3.amazonaws.com/client_files/1547826612.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> “Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C,” Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, (Oct. 2018), *available at*: <https://www.ipcc.ch/sr15/>

**WHEREAS**, there is currently insufficient information, technical coordination or financial assessment of the costs and mechanisms to rapidly retrofit and redesign local energy systems to enable them to be more resilient to a range of potential disruptive events, such as extreme weather, terrorism, and energy price escalation; and

**WHEREAS**, the United States has seen 246 separate billion-dollar-plus disasters since 1980, including 16 in 2017 and 14 in 2018, with a cumulative cost exceeding \$1.6 trillion (CPI-adjusted) and a total death toll of 13,210;<sup>4</sup> and

**WHEREAS**, in 2005 Hurricane Katrina led to 1,833 deaths and more than \$167.5 billion (CPI-adjusted) in losses, and a subsequent \$120 billion in supplemental disaster assistance and in 2012 Hurricane Sandy led to 159 deaths and more than \$73.5 billion in damages (CPI-adjusted), and a subsequent \$60.4 billion in supplemental disaster assistance;<sup>5</sup> and

**WHEREAS**, in 2017 three Category 4 hurricanes made landfall in the U.S. totaling more than \$275 billion (CPI-adjusted) in damages and a death toll of 3,167, including 2,981 from Hurricane Maria, which made landfall in Puerto Rico;<sup>6</sup> and

**WHEREAS**, in 2019 historic flooding hit the Midwest and southern plains significantly affecting agriculture, roads, bridges, levees, dams and other infrastructure, assets and industries, resulting in 11 deaths and yet-to-be determined economic costs;<sup>7</sup> and

**WHEREAS**, rising temperatures are lengthening the wildfire season and increasing wildfire risks throughout the Western United States due to earlier snow melts and forests that are drier longer,<sup>8</sup> the costs of putting out wildfires has increased dramatically, from \$550 million in 1985 to over \$3 billion in 2018<sup>9</sup> (2018 dollars<sup>10</sup>), and the economic losses associated with wildfire continues to grow, with the 2018 western wildfires costing over \$24.5 billion (CPI-adjusted);<sup>11</sup> and

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<sup>4</sup> National Climate Data Center, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, *available at*: <https://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/billions/events/US/1980-2018>

<sup>5</sup> National Climate Data Center, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, *available at*: <https://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/billions/events/US/1980-2018>

<sup>6</sup> National Climate Data Center, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, *available at*: <https://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/billions/events/US/1980-2018>

<sup>7</sup> National Climate Data Center, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, *available at*: <https://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/billions/events.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> Infographic: Western Wildfires and Climate Change, Union of Concerned Scientists, *available at*: [http://www.ucsusa.org/global\\_warming/science\\_and\\_impacts/impacts/infographic-wildfires-climate-change.html](http://www.ucsusa.org/global_warming/science_and_impacts/impacts/infographic-wildfires-climate-change.html)

<sup>9</sup> Federal Firefighting Costs (Suppression Only), National Interagency Fire Center, *available at*: [https://www.nifc.gov/fireInfo/fireInfo\\_documents/SuppCosts.pdf](https://www.nifc.gov/fireInfo/fireInfo_documents/SuppCosts.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> CPI Inflation Calculator, Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, *available at*: [http://www.bls.gov/data/inflation\\_calculator.htm](http://www.bls.gov/data/inflation_calculator.htm)

<sup>11</sup> “Assessing the U.S. Climate in 2018,” National Centers for Environmental Information, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, *available at*: <https://www.ncei.noaa.gov/news/national-climate-201812>

**WHEREAS**, Congress approved over \$50 billion in disaster relief in FY18;<sup>12</sup> and

**WHEREAS**, 2018 was the fourth warmest year on record behind 2016 (warmest), 2015 (second warmest) and 2017 (third warmest);<sup>13</sup> and

**WHEREAS**, as extreme weather events become more common, local governments in all geographic and climatic regions require resources to assist them in anticipating, preparing for and adapting to these events; and

**WHEREAS**, a preparedness response fund would provide financial assistance to accelerate the development of adaptive success models and provide a far-reaching damage prevention initiative that would help reduce the ultimate financial pressure on the federal government; and

**WHEREAS**, local governments are first responders—preparing in advance of emergency situations, offering immediate assistance to those impacted, and identifying strategies, solutions, and partnerships to address situations quickly and efficiently; and

**WHEREAS**, taking action now to adapt to a changing environment and create community resilience will help save lives, strengthen local economies, save taxpayer dollars and build preparedness for future events; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2014 the President’s Task Force on Climate Preparedness and Resilience, comprised of state, local and tribal leaders, including representatives from the National League of Cities (NLC) made recommendations to the President on ways the federal government can assist local efforts to address and prepare for the impacts of climate change.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that NLC calls on Congress and the Administration to partner with local governments and to support local action on climate change adaptation and resilience; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that NLC urges Congress and the Administration to take urgent action to help states and local governments conduct vulnerability assessments, develop and implement long-term mitigation, adaptation and resiliency action plans, and identify innovative financing opportunities to implement these assessments and plans in order to prepare, plan for and more quickly recover from extreme weather events; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that NLC calls on Congress and the Administration to recognize the unique risks and opportunities communities face and to offer customized tools and incentives to local governments to encourage communities to plan for and rapidly respond to the effects of climate change and extreme weather; and

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<sup>12</sup> The Disaster Relief Fund: Overview and Issues, Congressional Research Service (Feb. 1, 2019), *available at*: <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R45484/2>

<sup>13</sup> National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (Feb. 6, 2019), *available at*: <https://www.noaa.gov/news/2018-was-4th-hottest-year-on-record-for-globe>

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that NLC urges the federal government to develop a national strategy to assist communities in integrating the risks of climate change and extreme weather events into emergency management planning and responses to identify and quantify the economic value of regional infrastructure at risk under different scenarios; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that NLC urges the federal government to work with state and local governments, the insurance industry, and other stakeholders to develop an incentive-based disaster insurance and mitigation system that would encourage property owners to retrofit existing structures to reduce future losses from natural disasters; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that NLC calls on the federal government to outline strategies and actions to reduce the vulnerability of federal programs to the impacts of climate change and extreme weather; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that NLC calls on the federal government to better align federal funding with local preparedness and resilience-building efforts; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that NLC calls on Congress to fully fund grant programs that help local governments prepare, respond and recover from climate change and extreme weather events and establish a preparedness and response fund to support local governments that are at the forefront of developing adaptive solutions; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that NLC urges the federal government to develop grant and technical assistance programs to enable communities to develop community energy transition plans that ensure the capability of cities to maintain critical energy and infrastructure during disruptions to local, regional or national energy infrastructure; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that NLC urges the federal government to develop a national pilot project initiative to conduct detailed assessments and designs for resilient city energy system retrofit and redesign across a range of different regions and city sizes.

**NLC RESOLUTION #10****SUPPORTING URGENT ACTION TO REDUCE CARBON EMISSIONS AND  
MITIGATE THE EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE**

**WHEREAS**, climate change mitigation is a global problem that demands a global solution; and

**WHEREAS**, the 2014 National Climate Assessment reports that current evidence of climate change appears in every region and impacts are currently visible in every state, and concludes that the evidence of human-induced climate change continues to strengthen;<sup>1</sup> and

**WHEREAS**, a report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change indicates that limiting global warming to 1.5° C is necessary to avoid the worst impacts of climate change;<sup>2</sup> and

**WHEREAS**, while some impacts of climate change are inevitable, sharp reductions in greenhouse gas emissions will reduce the severity of the impacts and limit the rate of climate change; and

**WHEREAS**, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) 2015 Clean Power Plan set state-specific carbon emissions reductions goals that would have reduced carbon emissions from coal and natural gas fired power plants by 32 percent below 2005 levels by 2030; and

**WHEREAS**, EPA repealed the Clean Power Plan and replaced it with the Affordable Clean Energy Rule, which establishes emission guidelines for states to use when developing plans to limit carbon dioxide at their coal-fired power plants; and

**WHEREAS**, in order to meet the carbon emissions reductions goals necessary to help mitigate the effects of climate change on communities, improving energy efficiency, increasing energy conservation and deploying renewable energy systems will be essential at the local, state and federal levels; and

**WHEREAS**, improving energy efficiency, increasing energy conservation and deploying renewable energy systems will save taxpayer dollars, boost the national and local economy, enhance national security, increase our nation's energy independence, and improve environmental quality; and

**WHEREAS**, technology exists and continues to be developed that will help families, businesses and communities reduce energy use, but without standards to encourage adoption of new technology, many of these technology options will be unavailable or unaffordable; and

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<sup>1</sup> National Climate Assessment (May 2014), *available at*: <http://nca2014.globalchange.gov/>

<sup>2</sup> "Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C," Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, (Oct. 2018), *available at*: <https://www.ipcc.ch/sr15/>

**WHEREAS**, the transportation sector generates the largest share of greenhouse gas emissions, nearly 29 percent of 2017 greenhouse gas emissions, in the United States;<sup>3</sup> and

**WHEREAS**, buildings account for nearly 40 percent of the nation's energy consumption<sup>4</sup> and more than 70 percent of its electricity use,<sup>5</sup> and electricity production represents the second largest share of greenhouse gas emissions, 27.5 percent of 2017 greenhouse gas emissions, in the United States;<sup>6</sup> and

**WHEREAS**, indoor and outdoor lighting account for 8 percent of electricity consumed in the nation,<sup>7</sup> and rapid conversion to efficient lighting would result in significant greenhouse gas reductions as well as a decrease in base load energy needs; and

**WHEREAS**, communities large and small nationwide are laboratories of innovation and are taking action on climate mitigation, including adopting greenhouse gas reduction goals, successfully pioneering and demonstrating cost-effective clean energy solutions, and pursuing local strategies that create jobs, save energy and taxpayer dollars, and promote renewable sources; and

**WHEREAS**, the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) helped local governments undertake projects to reduce energy use, diversify energy supplies and improve air quality and the environment; and

**WHEREAS**, all levels of government must work to become more resilient by achieving greater energy independence based on a multi-pronged strategy of aggressively expanding renewable energy, significantly increasing energy efficiency portfolio standards, and creating new financing mechanisms; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2014 the President's Task Force on Climate Preparedness and Resilience, comprised of state, local and tribal leaders, including representatives from the National League of Cities (NLC), made recommendations to the President on ways the federal government can assist local efforts to address and prepare for the impacts of climate change; and

**WHEREAS**, 77 percent of millennial voters, ages 18-35, believe that the U.S. should try to stop or slow climate change.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Sources of Greenhouse Gas Emissions, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, *available at*: <https://www.epa.gov/ghgemissions/sources-greenhouse-gas-emissions>

<sup>4</sup> U.S. Energy Information Administration, *available at*: <http://www.eia.gov/tools/faqs/faq.cfm?id=86&t=1>

<sup>5</sup> Environmental and Energy Study Institute, Buildings and Climate Change, *available at*: <http://www.eesi.org/files/climate.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> Sources of Greenhouse Gas Emissions, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, *available at*: <https://www.epa.gov/ghgemissions/sources-greenhouse-gas-emissions>

<sup>7</sup> FAQ: How much electricity is used for lighting in the United States, U.S. Energy Information Administration, *available at*: <https://www.eia.gov/tools/faqs/faq.php?id=99&t=3>

<sup>8</sup> Poll, Alliance for Market Solutions, (March 5, 2018), *available at*: <https://allianceformarketsolutions.org/public-opinion/>

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that NLC calls on Congress and the Administration to partner with local governments, to support local action on climate change mitigation, and to provide essential tools, research, technology development, data, and funding, as well as workforce development, job training and community assistance, to help local governments achieve their greenhouse gas reduction targets and transition to a clean energy economy; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that NLC urges Congress and the Administration to take urgent action to reduce carbon emissions across a broad sector of the economy and become carbon neutral to mitigate the effects of climate change and hold warming to 1.5°C; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that NLC opposed efforts to repeal the Clean Power Plan and supports the U.S.'s reengagement in the Paris Climate Agreement; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that NLC opposes efforts to lower the CAFE standards or fuel efficiency for all types of vehicles; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that NLC calls on Congress to pass energy efficiency and conservation legislation to incentivize energy efficiency improvements in residential and commercial buildings, schools and federal buildings located in communities; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that NLC calls on Congress to pass a national renewable portfolio standard that increases the use of carbon neutral energy and promotes energy efficiency, with the goal of 50% carbon neutral energy by 2030 and 100% by 2050; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that NLC calls on Congress to pass a long-term extension of the investment tax credit and the production tax credit for renewable energy as an incentive for their development and deployment; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that NLC calls on Congress to reauthorize and fully fund the EECBG or other funding structure at the U.S. Department of Energy to further incentivize clean energy at the local level.