



Travis County Commissioners Court Voting Session Agenda Request

Meeting Date: November 7, 2017

Agenda Language:

Consider and take appropriate action on resolution joining the *We Are Still In* coalition.

Prepared By/Phone Number: Melissa Velasquez, 512-854-9222

Elected/Appointed Official or Department Head: Commissioner Brigid Shea

Commissioners Court Sponsor(s): Commissioner Shea and Judge Eckhardt

Background/Summary of Request and Attachments:

To date, 15 states and 435 cities and counties, in addition to hundreds of businesses, have pledged to uphold the Paris accord and commit to a clean energy economy. The number of residents pledged represents over 157.1 million people, and that number is growing every day.

As the impacts of climate change continue to intensify, as we have seen in the cases of Hurricanes Harvey and Irma, communities and governments will need to be more vigilant about taking precautions to prepare and protect the public from threats to their health and livelihoods, and to be more resilient in the face of catastrophic weather events and economic shocks.

Staff Recommendations:

Support.

Fiscal Impact and Source of Funding:

n/a



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

KEITH CARSON
SUPERVISOR, DISTRICT 5

October 16, 2017

County Judge Sarah Eckhardt
Travis County
700 Lavaca St., Suite 2.300
Austin, TX 78701

Dear County Judge Eckhardt:

I write on behalf of Alameda County, California to **encourage your county to join the We Are Still In coalition** to gain national and international recognition for your climate leadership. We Are Still In (<https://www.wearestillin.com/>) is a bottom-up network of thousands of states, local governments, universities, and businesses, organized in response to President Trump's decision to withdraw the United States from the Paris Climate Agreement. On June 27, 2017, our Board resolved to join other U.S. cities, counties, and states in supporting the goals of the Paris Climate Agreement and to strive to advance climate action in partnership with other jurisdictions.

The We Are Still In coalition now represents more than 127 million Americans and \$6.2 trillion of the U.S. economy in support of the internationally adopted Paris Climate Agreement. Counties in 22 states have joined.

As we have recently seen with increasingly severe storms, droughts, wildfires, and heat waves, climate change is already having and will continue to have significant impacts on county residents and the services counties provide. Counties are on the front lines of response to fires, floods, public health issues, and impacts on vulnerable communities. Our leadership should be recognized. Our voices should be heard. Our residents need to know we are doing our part to protect our communities.

We Are Still In provides an opportunity for counties to clearly declare our support of – and show the world our important role in – efforts to reduce climate change contributions and ensure climate preparedness. Together, we can remind the White House that a clean energy economy supports our residents' security, prosperity, and health.

Sign on by October 25 to ensure the residents of your county will be counted toward the total U.S. population represented by local and state governments supporting the Paris Climate Agreement. This total will be announced to the international community at the U.N. Climate Change Conference in Germany this November to demonstrate our continued national commitment to climate action. If you are unable to sign on by October 25, join by **December 8** to be counted for the international climate summit convening policy-makers in Paris on December 12, the two-year anniversary of the Paris Climate Agreement.

We are only eight million Americans away from achieving our goal of representing over half the U.S. population. Your county is a populous county in a state that has not joined, so your population will substantially contribute toward this goal if you sign on. Even if you have taken strong climate action, if you don't sign on, you won't be counted. Join to amplify your voice and make an international statement.

Counties typically join We Are Still In through a county executive's action or by adopting a resolution authorizing the county executive to register as a signatory. Alameda County staff have put together a toolkit of resources to simplify the process for you. The toolkit includes steps to join, Frequently Asked Questions, sample resolution language, a template Board letter, template briefing notes, and sample press releases. **You can find the toolkit online at <https://www.wearestillin.com/news/counties-toolkit>.**

Please reach out to me at (510) 272-6695 or dist5@acgov.org or to our Office of Sustainability at (510) 208-9521 or acsustain@acgov.org if you have any questions. I hope you will stand up and be heard.

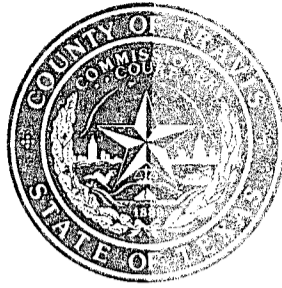
Sincerely,



Supervisor Keith Carson
District 5

Cc: Other Members, Board of Supervisors
County Administrator
Director, General Services Agency
County Counsel

Travis County Commissioners Court



FILED FOR RECORD
2017 NOV 13 AM 7:37
DANA DEDEAYVOR
COUNTY CLERK
TRAVIS COUNTY, TEXAS

Resolution

A RESOLUTION TO SUPPORT THE PARIS CLIMATE AGREEMENT AND ADD TRAVIS COUNTY TO THE "WE ARE STILL IN" COALITION

WHEREAS, climate change has been widely recognized as a worldwide threat with the potential to harm our and future generations' economy, safety, public health, and quality of life; and

WHEREAS, Travis County desires to protect and enhance quality of life for all those who live, work, learn, and play in our community, now and in the future; and

WHEREAS, impacts from climate change that we can anticipate include storms of greater magnitude which will create flooding, loss of life, destruction of public and private property, critical infrastructure interruption, increased wildland fires, increased temperatures leading to decreased air quality, and longer and hotter heat waves creating agricultural and public health concern, and

WHEREAS, people who are already particularly vulnerable – such as the elderly, children, communities of color, and low-income communities – will bear an increased and disproportionate burden of the negative health and economic impacts of climate change; and

WHEREAS, county governments will face growing impacts of climate change ranging from providing shelter to coastal storm evacuees, to public health needs, food assistance, construction and maintenance of infrastructure, fire fighting, public safety, and emergency coordination; and

WHEREAS, 195 countries, including the United States, have vowed to address climate change through the Paris Agreement reached in December 2015 by enacting programs to limit global temperature increases to below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels; and

WHEREAS, as the United States is a major producer of greenhouse gases, withdrawal from the Paris Agreement should not mean disregarding our global climate responsibilities; and

WHEREAS, over 2,300 governors, county officials, mayors, businesses, and other entities from across the United States, representing over half of the U.S. population have signed the We Are Still In declaration to demonstrate their intent to continue to ensure the U.S. remains a global leader in reducing emissions and transitioning to a clean energy economy; and

WHEREAS, absence of federal leadership increases the importance of local leadership in avoiding the most dangerous and costly effects of climate change; and

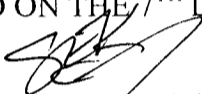
WHEREAS, Travis County has already taken actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and enhance quality of life in our communities, including creating nationally-recognized endangered species preserves as well as extensive greenbelts and parks along County creeks, passage of the PACE program to promote greater energy and water efficiency; requiring all new County buildings meet at least LEED Silver rating; encouraging staff to telecommute and use transit and installing an electric vehicle charging station donated by Austin Energy ; and

WHEREAS, Travis County is fully committed to building resiliency and adapting its services to address climate impacts on the community;

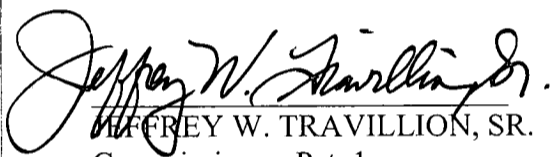
THEREFORE, the Travis County Commissioners Court joins with other U.S. states, counties, and cities in supporting the goals of the Paris Agreement; and joins with the We Are Still In coalition in support of combating the threat of climate change; and

Be It Further Resolved that the Travis County Commissioner Court charges relevant staff to review policies and procedures for the opportunity to reduce our impact on the climate and to report back to the Court by April 22, 2018.

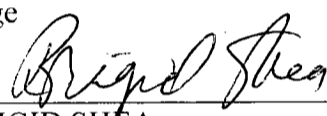
SIGNED AND ENTERED ON THE 7TH DAY OF November, 2017.



SARAH ECKHARDT
Travis County Judge



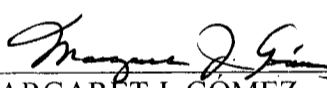
JEFFREY W. TRAVILLION, SR.
Commissioner, Pct. 1



BRIGID SHEA
Commissioner, Pct. 2

AGAINST

GERALD DAUGHERTY
Commissioner, Pct. 3



MARGARET J. GOMEZ
Commissioner, Pct. 4