

RESOLUTION CALLING FOR THE CITY TO FILE A COMPLAINT AGAINST FOSSIL FUEL POLLUTERS

WHEREAS, the City of Chicago and communities across the State of Illinois are already experiencing the effects of global climate disruption; and

WHEREAS, trends in precipitation and temperature extremes are likely to continue unless there are ambitious actions to curb greenhouse gas emissions; and

WHEREAS, in October 2018, the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the largest collaborative and consensus-based effort among the world's scientific community, conservatively estimated that global net greenhouse gas emissions must reach net zero no later than 2050 in order to avoid a dangerous increase in global temperatures that result in long-lasting and/or catastrophic and irreversible climate impacts; and

WHEREAS, the IPCC warned on April 4, 2022, that "limiting warming to around 1.5°C (2.7°F) requires global greenhouse gas emissions to peak before 2025 at the latest, and be reduced by 43% by 2030," while methane must be reduced by a third, and that "even if we do this, it is almost inevitable that we will temporarily exceed this temperature threshold"; and

WHEREAS, the National Climate and Health Assessment of the U.S. Global Climate Change Research Program identified climate change as a significant threat to the health of the people of the United States; and

WHEREAS, changes to the climate were caused by, and continue to be exacerbated by, unabated fossil fuel use; since the 1960s, unchecked fossil fuel combustion has caused an unprecedentedly rapid rise in the concentration of greenhouse gases (GHGs) in the atmosphere; indeed, fossil fuel combustion accounts for nearly 80 percent of all GHG emissions between 1970 and 2010; as a result, more heat has been, is being, and will continue to be trapped by the atmosphere, triggering changes to the climate; and

WHEREAS, fossil fuel companies have substantially contributed to and exacerbated the impacts of human-caused climate change, thereby substantially contributing to Chicago's injuries; fossil fuel companies are responsible for billions of tons of the excess greenhouse gas emissions in the atmosphere; they have sold a substantial percentage of all the fossil fuels whose intended and foreseeable use – i.e., combustion – contributed to and exacerbated the impacts of climate change; moreover, long after they became aware of the dangers of climate change, these companies chose to develop dirtier fuel sources and sell dirtier fuels that create substantially more GHGs than traditional fossil fuels when burned, notably those developed from the Canadian tar sands; and

WHEREAS, fossil fuel companies have known for nearly 50 years that greenhouse gas pollution from their products has a significant impact on the Earth's climate and sea levels; their awareness of the negative implications of their own behavior corresponds almost exactly with skyrocketing greenhouse gas emissions; and

WHEREAS, fossil fuel companies acted to prevent and forestall changes in energy use and supply, which they knew were needed, exacerbating the harms suffered by Chicago and its residents; and by hiding what they knew about, and affirmatively misrepresenting the dangers of unabated fossil fuel use, the companies protected fossil fuel demand, and obstructed the changes needed to prevent or at least minimize the impacts of climate change; and

WHEREAS, according to the 2021 Assessment of the Impacts of Climate Change in Illinois: (1) over the past 120 years, the average daily temperature in Illinois has increased by 1–2°F in most areas, mean precipitation has increased by 5–20%, and the number of 2-inch rain days has increased by 40%; (2) the climate of Illinois is expected to continue changing over this century, with significant impacts on water resources, agriculture, human health, and the health of plants and animals; (3) projected changes include warming of 4–9°F, with large increases in extreme high temperatures and increasingly severe summer droughts; (4) the risk of severe heat-related illnesses, such as heat stroke, will increase; (5) Illinois is expected to see an overall increase in precipitation, with increases in both heavy rains and the length of dry spells; (6) increased intensities of rainfall events are expected to exacerbate stresses on aging urban drainage systems and increase the incidence of combined sewer outflows (CSOs), which affect water quality of streams, rivers, and Lake Michigan; (7) heavy precipitation events will cause more flooding and increased risk of waterborne infectious diseases, mold exposure, injuries, and emotional distress; (8) rising temperatures and increasing precipitation are already creating conditions that permit mosquitoes and ticks to survive in previously unsuitable locations; the biting season will become longer, and the risk of vector-borne diseases will increase; (9) levels of mold, pollen, and ozone pollution are expected to increase, and the pollen season will lengthen, resulting in more severe respiratory allergies and more frequent asthma attacks; (10) those with already high rates of chronic disease, poor housing, and barriers to accessing health care and clean air are expected to experience more severe health impacts from climate change than the population of Illinois overall; and

WHEREAS, lakefront erosion and residential and commercial flooding in Chicago are being accelerated by a combination of warming temperatures, increased precipitation, and extreme storms; and

WHEREAS, climate change has significant impacts on all community members, but disproportionately impacts those who are most vulnerable, in particular those who are currently living in poverty with high rates of chronic disease, poor housing, barriers to healthcare access, unhealthy community design, and polluted air, the young, and the elderly; and

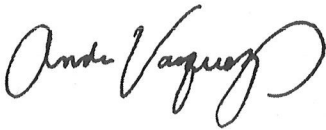
WHEREAS, the cost of climate change is increasing dramatically, with weather/climate disaster events in the United States in 2022 resulting in losses exceeding \$160 billion; and

WHEREAS, Chicago taxpayers cannot pay the full costs of the remediation that is needed, nor should they; the costs should be shared by the fossil fuel companies because they knowingly and substantially contributed to the climate crisis by producing, promoting and selling a substantial portion of the fossil fuels that are causing and exacerbating climate change, while concealing and misrepresenting the dangers associated with their intended use; and

WHEREAS, the governments of the Federal District of Columbia (Washington D.C); Counties of Anne Arundel (Maryland), Boulder (Colorado), Honolulu (Hawaii), King (Washington), San Mateo (California), Santa Cruz (California); Cities of Annapolis, Baltimore, Charleston, Hoboken, Honolulu, New York, Oakland, Richmond, Santa Cruz; and States of Connecticut, Delaware, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Rhode Island and Vermont have pursued litigation with various fossil fuel companies alleging their misrepresentation and distortion of their awareness of the effects of their businesses on the environment; and

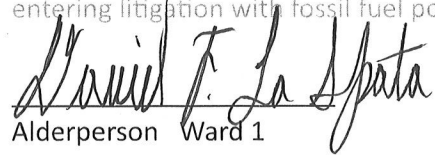
WHEREAS, the City of Chicago recognizes and acknowledges that the impacts of climate change pose a life-altering threat to our city and the region, now and increasingly in the future, as well as the state, our nation, and all life on the planet,

BE IT RESOLVED, that we, the members of City Council for the City of Chicago, do hereby call on the City of Chicago to file a complaint against fossil fuel companies to ensure that the parties who have profited from externalizing the consequences and costs of dealing with global warming bear the costs of those impacts, rather than the City, taxpayers, residents, or broader segments of the public.



Andre Vasquez, Jr.
Aldersperson, 40th Ward

The following legislation is being introduced by Alderperson Andre Vasque, Jr. Ward 40 regarding entering litigation with fossil fuel polluters co-sponsored by:


Alderperson Ward 1

Alderperson Ward 12

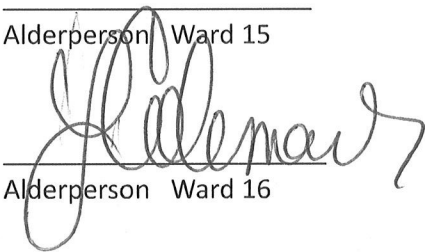
Alderperson Ward 2

Alderperson Ward 13

Alderperson Ward 3

Alderperson Ward 14

Alderperson Ward 4

Alderperson Ward 15

Alderperson Ward 16

Alderperson Ward 5

Alderperson Ward 17

Alderperson Ward 6

Alderperson Ward 18

Alderperson Ward 7

Alderperson Ward 19

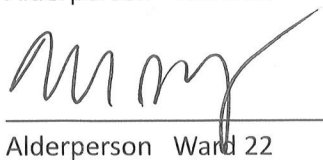
Alderperson Ward 8

Alderperson Ward 20

Alderperson Ward 9

Alderperson Ward 21

Alderperson Ward 10


Alderperson Ward 22

Alderperson Ward 11

The following legislation is being introduced by Alderperson Andre Vasque, Jr. Ward 40 regarding entering litigation with fossil fuel polluters co-sponsored by:

Alderperson Ward 23

Alderperson Ward 34

Alderperson Ward 24

Alderperson Ward 35

Alderperson Ward 25

Alderperson Ward 36

Alderperson Ward 26

Alderperson Ward 37

Alderperson Ward 27

Alderperson Ward 38

Alderperson Ward 28

Alderperson Ward 39

Alderperson Ward 29

Alderperson Ward 40

Alderperson Ward 30

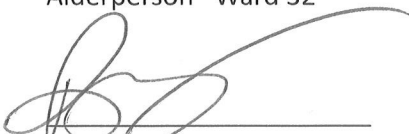
Alderperson Ward 41

Alderperson Ward 31

Alderperson Ward 42

Alderperson Ward 32

Alderperson Ward 43



Alderperson Ward 33

Alderperson Ward 44

The following legislation is being introduced by Alderperson Andre Vasque, Jr. Ward 40 regarding entering litigation with fossil fuel polluters co-sponsored by:

Alderperson Ward 45

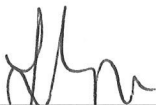
Mayor Johnson

Alderperson Ward 46

Clerk Valencia



Alderperson Ward 47



Alderperson Ward 48

Alderperson Ward 49

Alderperson Ward 50