

Resolution Endorsing the Declaration of a Climate Emergency in the Town of East Hampton

Whereas, the effects of climate change, are and will continue to damage and endanger East Hampton infrastructure, property, livelihoods and coastline, will continue to harm our farms and natural environment, hurt our fishing industry due to acidification and the warming of our waters; encourage species decline and migration, spread invasive species and diseases, erode our beaches and contaminate drinking water supplies as sea levels rise, reduce recreational opportunities, and pose health threats to our citizens; and

Whereas, the Town of East Hampton understands that climate change is primarily due to the burning of fossil fuels; and

Whereas, we believe that town government's response to climate change can provide the Town and townspeople with an unprecedented opportunity to save money, build a livable, energy independent and secure community, a vibrant innovative economy and resilient infrastructure; and

Whereas, the scope and scale of action necessary to stabilize the climate and biosphere will require unprecedented levels of local, national and global public awareness, engagement, and deliberation to develop and implement effective and just policies to address the climate crisis; and

Whereas, the East Hampton Town Board has recognized the urgent need to combat climate change by developing and approving in October 2015, The Town of East Hampton Climate Action Plan, which was the Town's initial blueprint to its climate emergency response, listing specific steps for local climate mitigation, resilience, adaptation, engagement, education, advocacy, and research and development programs; and

Whereas, the Town's climate action plan is only a start in a much larger effort to eliminate East Hampton's greenhouse gas emissions and build a sustainable community; and

Whereas, the approval of a climate emergency declaration is a critical step toward raising community awareness, support and commitment to reach the Town's goals of meeting the equivalent of 100 percent of annual, economy-wide energy consumption, such as electricity, heating, and transportation with renewable energy sources by the year 2030; and

Whereas, as of January 2021 1,870 municipalities and nations - and counting - world wide have declared climate emergencies, including 31 countries, more than 31 municipalities in the Northeast, including New York City, Boston, Bar Harbor, Maine, and 10 townships on Cape Cod, accounting for nearly one billion people worldwide; and

Whereas, East Hampton should act as a global leader by escalating its efforts to convert to an ecologically, socially, and economically regenerative local economy at emergency speed, as well as advocating for local regional, national, and international efforts necessary to reverse global warming and the ecological crisis;

Now be it therefore resolved, East Hampton declares that a climate and ecological emergency threatens our town, region, state, nation, civilization, humanity and the natural world; and be it further

Resolved, that by declaring this emergency the Town Board is committing to make climate mitigation and the elimination of greenhouse gas emissions a guiding principle and objective of all municipal operations, all policy and purchasing decisions, all planning and zoning decisions, all aspects of town business for the foreseeable future; and be it further

Resolved, that the Natural Resources Department and Energy Sustainability Committee update the Climate Action Plan annually to guide the Town and the community in its implementation, toward the goal of meeting 100 percent of annual, economy-wide energy consumption with renewable energy sources by the year 2030, thereby vastly reducing the Town's greenhouse gas emissions, and accelerating adaptation and resilience strategies in preparation for intensifying local climate impacts and ensuring a just transition for residents; and be it further

Resolved, that the Town Board, supported and guided by the Town Natural Resources Department, in alignment with the most recent scientific findings, and with the assistance of the Town Energy Sustainability Committee, engage and educate town departments, staff, and residents to implement, adapt and expand the Town's Climate Action Plan and all climate mitigation efforts; and be it further

Resolved that the Town engage with consultants to develop a renewable energy roadmap, a sharable tool to demonstrate and mark the progress of all measures taken so town employees and

residents can track the Town's march to its critical 2030 and 100 percent renewable energy goals; and be it further

Resolved, that by the adoption of this resolution, the Town calls on the Suffolk County Legislature, the State of New York, the United States Congress, the President of the United States, and all governments and people worldwide to declare a climate emergency and initiate a climate mobilization to reverse global warming and the ecological crisis, and provide maximum protection for all people and species of the world; and be it further

Resolved, in furtherance of this resolution, the Town shall submit a certified copy of this resolution to New York State senators Chuck Schumer and Kirsten Gillibrand, U.S. Rep. Lee Zeldin, Gov. Andrew Cuomo, New York State Assembly member Fred W. Thiele and New York State Sen. Anthony H. Palumbo, Suffolk County Executive Steven Bellone, Suffolk County Legislator Bridget Fleming, and the town and village boards of East Hampton, Sag Harbor, Southampton, Shelter Island, Southold and Riverhead, requesting that all their relevant support and assistance in carrying out this resolution be provided.