



JOINT RESOLUTION 5F

Purpose of Resolution

To emphasize the responsibility the University of New Mexico (UNM) has in addressing the climate crisis we are living in, the student body of UNM urges that President Garnett S. Stokes and the UNM Board of Regents declare a climate emergency and act upon the recommendations suggested in this and upcoming ASUNM Resolutions to approach this urgent matter.

WHEREAS, the Associated Students of the University of New Mexico (ASUNM) is the representative body of the undergraduate students and promotes student success; and

WHEREAS, climate change is the defining issue of our time; from shifting weather patterns that threaten food production, to rising sea levels that increase the risk of catastrophic flooding, the impacts of climate change are global in scope and unprecedented in scale; and

WHEREAS, climate change is defined as global or regional changes observed in the weather patterns of the Earth over extended periods explained by statistical measures such as the global average temperature (Earth's surface temperature and sea surface temperature), precipitation patterns (rainfall, snowfall, hail, etc.), biomass, sea level, solar activity, chemical composition of air, volcanic eruptions, etc.; and[1]

WHEREAS, global warming, a product of climate change, is the long-term heating of the climate system as a product of both of natural and anthropogenic activity, that occurs when greenhouse gases and air pollutants

trap the solar radiation the Earth absorbs from the sun, thereby causing the greenhouse effect; and[2]

WHEREAS, anthropogenic emissions are defined as emissions of greenhouse gases, greenhouse gas precursors, and aerosols associated with human activities, this includes the burning of fossil fuels (coal, petroleum, natural gas), deforestation, changes in land use, increasing livestock farming, the use of noxious fertilizers, etc., that result in a net increase in emissions; and [3]

WHEREAS, the United Nations Statistics Division recognizes that climate change is unequivocally caused by the greenhouse gas emissions released as a result of continued anthropogenic activity; and[4]

WHEREAS, for the past fifty (50) years, we have seen global warming to a dangerous degree, accelerating to the fastest pace in recorded history; and[5]

WHEREAS, the Fourth (4th) National Climate Assessment Volume II (NCA4), mandated by the United States Congress and completed in November 2018, is a comprehensive and authoritative report on climate change and its impacts in the United States, this report finds that “climate change creates new risks and exacerbates existing vulnerabilities in communities across the United States, presenting growing challenges to human health and safety, quality of life, and the rate of economic growth”; and[6]

WHEREAS, the NCA4 finds that, “without substantial and sustained global mitigation and regional adaptation efforts, climate change is expected to cause growing losses to American infrastructure and property and impede the rate of economic growth over this century”; and

WHEREAS, the NCA4 concludes that “climate change increasingly threatens Indigenous communities’ livelihoods, economies, health, and cultural identities by disrupting interconnected social, physical, and ecological systems”; and

WHEREAS, scientists and nations have determined that it is imperative for capping average global warming to one point five degrees Celsius (1.5°C) or two point seven degrees Fahrenheit (2.7° F) above pre-industrial (circa 1880) temperatures to ensure the survival of human civilization and life-sustaining ecosystems; and[7]

WHEREAS, scientists have determined that carbon emissions must decrease by forty-five percent (45%) of 2010 levels by 2030 and drop to zero (0) by 2050 in order to have any chance of limiting warming to one point five degrees Celsius (1.5°C) or two point seven degrees Fahrenheit (2.7°F); and

WHEREAS, climate change creates new risks and exacerbates existing vulnerabilities in communities across New Mexico and presents growing challenges for human health and safety, quality of life and rate of economic growth; and[8]

WHEREAS, the 2019-003 New Mexico Executive Order states that New Mexico will support the Paris Climate Agreement by reducing emissions by forty-five percent (45%) in comparison to 2005 emissions by 2030; and[9]

WHEREAS, on September 18th, 2019, the City of Albuquerque unanimously declared a Climate Emergency; and [10]

WHEREAS, an addition to the City of Albuquerque, states, cities, and other major institutions across the world have called for change and since declared a climate emergency, the European Union, 1,468 jurisdictions in twenty-eight (28) countries, seven-thousand (7000) universities, and 11,258 scientists from across the world[11], Bernalillo County, Santa Fe County, and Taos County have declared a Climate Emergency; and

WHEREAS, New Mexico state agencies are required to formulate climate mitigation and adaptation plans in accordance with the 2019-003 Executive Order; and

WHEREAS, in 2007 former UNM President David J. Schmidly signed the American College and University President's Climate Commitment (ACUPCC – later became Second Nature) committing UNM to carbon neutrality; and [12]

WHEREAS, in 2008, UNM began the Energy Conservation Program to change behaviors and adopts Sustainability as a core value; and[13]

WHEREAS, in 2009, UNM Sustainability Council submitted the Climate Action Plan, outlining a list of projects with specific actions and goals that UNM can accomplish in five-year increments with a reasonable level of funding and technological advances compiled by the Carbon Neutral Task Force formed by the Sustainability Council and headed by Jeff Zumwalt, Associate Director; and[14]

WHEREAS, in 2018 UNM students with Environment New Mexico delivered fifteen hundred (1500) petition signatures in favor of transitioning UNM to one hundred percent (100%) renewable energy, along with a handbook providing a plan to enact this; and

WHEREAS, UNM Leaders for Environmental Foresight (LEAF) is a coalition of students, faculty, staff, and alumni at UNM who recognize that people face an accelerating climate crisis, with only a short window of time to avert the catastrophic consequences of current trajectory and encourages UNM to declare a climate emergency; and

WHEREAS, the current and future generations, including UNM students, will bear the brunt of the increasing climate chaos created by the combustion of fossil fuels that our own educational institution is itself a large investor; and[15]

WHEREAS, the University is an educational institution with a moral obligation to speak the truth, lead the community to a better future, and prepare students to thrive and achieve their goals in a changing world; and

THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED, that ASUNM calls upon the University to declare a Climate Emergency in recognition of the climate crisis; and

THEREFORE, LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED, that ASUNM encourages that, in accordance with this declaration, UNM provides plans, and acts concretely upon those plans, so that UNM can address and lessen the consequences of this emergency; these plans and actions include University divestment from fossil fuels, drafting and submitting a plan to become a carbon neutral institution, and investing in climate education and research; and

THEREFORE, LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED, that ASUNM encourages that UNM prioritizes any available funds to support this goal of a cleaner energy future and a resilient community; and

THEREFORE, LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED, that ASUNM encourages increased communication through social media, university-wide emails, University website updates, as well as committees and boards about University sustainability that students are members of to ensure students, faculty, and staff remain informed and contribute to University efforts and understand the urgency of the climate crisis in accordance with current science; and

THEREFORE, LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED, that ASUNM encourages UNM to reinstate the sustainability council; and

THEREFORE, LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED, that ASUNM implores the University to commission campus-wide sustainability to conduct a thorough examination of the University's current state of affairs and identify priority next steps to attain the aforementioned recommendations; and

THEREFORE, LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED, that ASUNM supports UNM LEAF in their goals to hold the University accountable to its commitments to create a more sustainable future; and

THEREFORE, LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to Albuquerque Mayor Tim Keller, UNM Board of Regents, UNM President Garnett S. Stokes, UNM Vice President for Equity and Inclusion Assata Zerai, UNM Vice President for Student Affairs Eliseo “Cheo” Torres, UNM Vice President of Student Affairs Tim Gutierrez, UNM Dean of Students Nasha Torrez, UNM Office of Equal Opportunity Director Francie Cordova, UNM Sustainability Program, UNM Leaf, and the UNM undergraduate student body.

- [1] <https://climate.nasa.gov/resources/global-warming-vs-climate-change/>
- [2] <https://climate.nasa.gov/causes/>
- [3] https://archive.ipcc.ch/pdf/special-reports/srex/SREX-Annex_Glossary.pdf
- [4] <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/envstats/climatechange.cshtml>
- [5] <https://www.nrdc.org/stories/global-warming-101>
- [6] <https://nca2018.globalchange.gov/>
- [7] https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/sites/2/2019/06/SR15_Full_Report_High_Res.pdf
- [8] https://www.governor.state.nm.us/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/EO_2019-003.pdf
- [9] https://www.governor.state.nm.us/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/EO_2019-003.pdf
- [10] <https://www.cabq.gov/sustainability/climate-action-plan>
- [11] <https://academic.oup.com/bioscience/article/70/1/8/5610806>
- [12] <https://sustainability.unm.edu/assets/documents/unm-climate-action-plan.pdf>
- [13] <http://lei.unm.edu/unm-energy-conservation.html>
- [14] <http://sustainability.unm.edu/assets/documents/unm-climate-action-plan.pdf>
- [15] <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/articles/2019-03-15/the-climate-emergency-and-the-next-generation>

Adopted by the Associated Students of the University of New Mexico on this 23rd day of September, 2020



Muskan "Mia" Amin, ASUNM President



Ana Paula Milán, ASUNM Vice President



Suha Musa, ASUNM President Pro-Tempore



*Resolution introduced by: Joshua Mayo Parks (A), Simon Walker (A), UNM LEAF (A), Senator E. Hotz (A)(S)(E), Senator D. Rodriguez (A)(S)(E).