

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2017

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HOUSE RESOLUTION 401

Sponsors: Representatives Harrison, Autry, Fisher, and Farmer-Butterfield (Primary Sponsors).

For a complete list of sponsors, refer to the North Carolina General Assembly web site.

Referred to: Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House

March 20, 2017

1 A HOUSE RESOLUTION SUPPORTING A STATE GOAL OF ONE HUNDRED PERCENT
2 CLEAN ENERGY BY 2050 AND THE CREATION OF GREEN JOBS.

3 Whereas, since 1880, climate change has increased the global average surface
4 temperature by 1.00 degree Celsius (1.8 degrees Fahrenheit); and

5 Whereas, climate change is expected to increasingly impact North Carolina's
6 temperatures, precipitation, and sea level with harmful consequences in coming years; and

7 Whereas, climate change and global average temperature increases are primarily due
8 to human-caused fossil fuels emissions, including coal, oil, and natural gas, according to the
9 United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, National Academy of Sciences,
10 American Meteorological Society, United States Environmental Protection Agency, United
11 States Department of Defense, and numerous other leading scientific, academic, and
12 governmental authorities both in the United States and internationally; and

13 Whereas, a final agreement of the United Nations Conference of Parties (COP21),
14 including the United States and a total of 195 nations, was reached in Paris, France, on
15 December 12, 2015, entered into force on November 4, 2016, and stated the aim to "hold the
16 increase in the global average temperature to well below 2 degrees Celsius above preindustrial
17 levels and pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius above
18 preindustrial levels"; and

19 Whereas, scientists have concluded the concentration of carbon dioxide, the leading
20 greenhouse gas, in the Earth's atmosphere is currently and consistently over 400 parts per
21 million (ppm) and will likely stay above this level for the indefinite future for the first time in
22 millions of years; and

23 Whereas, 16 of the 17 hottest years on record have occurred in the 21st century, and
24 2016 is the hottest year on record; and

25 Whereas, an increase in the global average temperature, if not stopped, will have
26 major adverse impacts on both the natural and human-made environments due to longer, more
27 intense heat waves, prolonged droughts, rising sea levels, ocean acidification, and more intense
28 and frequent extreme weather events; and

29 Whereas, these physical effects are expected to lead to water scarcity, food
30 insecurity, increasing numbers of refugees, increased poverty, and mass extinctions of species;
31 and

32 Whereas, studies completed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Risky
33 Business Project, Duke University, and others point to the severe economic costs of climate
34 change and continuing use of fossil fuel, estimating billions of dollars a year in costs nationally
35 and trillions globally; and



1 Whereas, leading economists, policy experts, and business leaders conclude that
2 transitioning to a clean energy economy available for all would create millions of green jobs
3 nationally, improve our living standards, and boost economic growth in coming years; and

4 Whereas, low-income communities and communities of color in North Carolina and
5 the United States are inordinately exposed to pollution that causes serious health problems,
6 such as cancer and asthma, from fossil fuels, including the dirtiest coal-fired power plants,
7 which produce coal ash and which are disproportionately located in communities of color; and

8 Whereas, a Stanford University and University of California-Berkeley study
9 concludes the United States energy supply could be based entirely on renewable energy by the
10 year 2050 using current technologies and 80% on renewable energy by 2030 while creating
11 numerous green jobs; and

12 Whereas, municipalities, organizations, businesses, and academic institutions
13 throughout the world have set a goal to achieve carbon or climate neutrality by 2050 or earlier;
14 and

15 Whereas, over 600 American colleges and universities have made a commitment to
16 reduce greenhouse gases, including Appalachian State University, Blue Ridge Community
17 College, Carteret Community College, Catawba College, Central Carolina Community College,
18 Davidson College, Duke University, Elizabeth City State University, Fayetteville State
19 University, Guilford College, North Carolina Central University, Queens University of
20 Charlotte, Southeastern Community College, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill,
21 the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, the University of North Carolina at Greensboro,
22 the University of North Carolina at Pembroke, Wake Technical Community College, and
23 Warren Wilson College; and

24 Whereas, some of the statistics regarding North Carolina's use of solar energy
25 include the following: (i) installing 1,140 megawatts of solar electric capacity in 2015, ranking
26 it second nationally; (ii) investing nearly \$1.7 billion on solar installations in the State, a 159%
27 increase over the previous year; (iii) having more than 200 solar companies at work throughout
28 the value chain in North Carolina, which employs some 6,000 people; (iv) ranking third in the
29 nation in installed solar capacity, providing enough energy to power 260,000 homes; and (v)
30 having more offshore wind energy potential than any Atlantic state; and

31 Whereas, since 2010, solar photovoltaic system prices in the United States have
32 dropped by 66%; and

33 Whereas, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's Fifth Assessment
34 Report recommended a global goal of achieving near zero greenhouse gas emissions or below,
35 which is necessary to stabilize the global average temperature to avoid climate catastrophe;
36 Now, therefore,

37 Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

38 **SECTION 1.** The State of North Carolina should establish a transition from a fossil
39 fuel-based economy to one hundred percent (100%) clean renewable energy for all energy
40 sector economies, by December 31, 2050, to avoid climate catastrophe, to promote job creation
41 and economic growth, and to protect the earth for current and future generations from climate
42 catastrophe.

43 **SECTION 2.** This resolution is effective upon adoption.