



# City of Emeryville

CALIFORNIA

## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** March 20, 2018  
**TO:** Carolyn Lehr, City Manager  
**FROM:** Andrew Clough, Acting Public Works Director  
**SUBJECT:** Resolution Of The City Council Of The City Of Emeryville Urging  
The United States Congress To Enact A Revenue-Neutral Carbon  
Tax

### RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that City Council approve the attached resolution.

### BACKGROUND

The release of carbon into the atmosphere through human activities, largely due to the use of fossil fuels, is the primary contributor to climate change worldwide. Climate change, with its increases in temperature, increased variability in precipitation, and rapid sea-level rise, poses significant risk to Emeryville. Not only is the natural environment affected, but the economy, critical infrastructure, and community services may all be impacted.

### DISCUSSION

The use of fossil fuels has embedded climate and human health costs, and those costs are currently borne not by the producers or users of those fuels but by all members of our communities worldwide. The United States Congress can enact a national carbon tax on fossil fuels based on the amount of carbon dioxide the fuel will emit when burned. It would incentivize manufacturers, businesses, and consumers throughout the economy to produce and less fossil fuel, and would spur investment in and deployment of clean energy resources and energy efficient processes, thereby slowing climate change. Benefits to public health, the environment, and the economy can be anticipated from such a shift.

The attached resolution urges the United States Congress to enact without delay a tax on carbon-based fossil fuels; that the fee should be collected once, as far upstream in the economy as practical, or at the port of entry into the United States; that the fee rate should start low and increase steadily and predictably, to achieve the goal of reducing U.S. CO2 emissions to 10% of 1990 levels by 2050; that all revenues from the fee should be used to protect low and middle income Americans from the impact of rising prices due to the tax and/or to undertake climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts that benefit vulnerable communities, including returning these revenues directly to American households; and that the international competitiveness of U. S. businesses should be protected by using border tariffs and refunds of the fee.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

There is no fiscal impact to this proposal.

## **STAFF COMMUNICATION WITH THE PUBLIC**

Staff communicated with a representative of the Alameda County Citizens' Climate Lobby Endorsements group.

## **CONCLUSION**

Staff recommends that City Council approve the attached resolution.

**PREPARED BY:** Nancy Humphrey, Environmental Programs Supervisor

**APPROVED AND FORWARDED TO THE  
CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EMERYVILLE:**



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Carolyn Lehr, City Manager

## **ATTACHMENTS**

- Resolution