



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Chicago City Council endorses national policy to fight climate change

**CHICAGO** – Chicago is now the largest of [more than 100 municipalities](#) to support a national Carbon Fee and Dividend policy. Passing the resolution positions Chicago as a global leader in climate action and furthers the goals of the [Sustainable Chicago Action Agenda](#), such as reducing carbon emissions and improving air quality.

The Chicago City Council passed a resolution (R2017-915) Wednesday (3/13/19) endorsing a policy to fight climate change known as Carbon Fee and Dividend, whereby a rising fee is placed on the greenhouse gas content of fuels and revenue from the fee is allocated to American households as a monthly dividend. The resolution urges members of the Illinois congressional delegation to support this policy, which has been introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives as the [Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act](#) (H.R. 763).

Among the 19 cosponsors of the bipartisan House bill are Rep. Dan Lipinski (D-IL) and Rep. Jan Schakowsky (D-IL). Research by Phillip Ehret and Leaf Van Boven has shown that climate bills with bipartisan support have a greater chance of passing Congress.

“Climate change is the most pressing issue of this generation and science tells us that we have only decades to reduce our carbon footprint to mitigate disaster,” said lead sponsor Alderman Joe Moore (49th ward). “There is an urgent need for our country to bring down carbon emissions and we must do so in a way that does not harm our low- and moderate-income families. I am proud to sponsor this resolution.”

Residents of Chicago and the [Midwest](#) are already experiencing extreme weather events due to global warming. If the country does not reduce carbon pollution, Chicagoans can expect more frequent heat waves and more intense downpours leading to increased flooding. Alternating droughts and heat waves will negatively impact agricultural productivity in crops like wheat, corn and soy.

“We’re absolutely thrilled that the City Council has endorsed Carbon Fee and Dividend,” said Justin Pelczarski, co-leader of the Chicago South Side chapter of Citizens’ Climate Lobby. “If enacted, this policy would bring greenhouse gas emissions down 40 percent in the first 12 years and 90 percent by 2050. By giving the revenue back to households, this policy shields people, especially low- and middle-income Americans, from any economic impact associated with the fee. By cosponsoring legislation to enact this policy, representatives Lipinski and Schakowsky are taking a major step to protect their constituents from the future impact of climate change.”

[The Resolution](#) acknowledges these risks to public safety and public health, and points out that “presently the environmental, health and social costs of CO2 emissions are not included in prices of fossil fuels, but rather these externalized costs are borne directly and indirectly by all Americans and global citizens.”

Hundreds of Citizens' Climate Lobby volunteers across Chicago built support for this resolution. Their work received a much-appreciated boost when high school students from Horizon Science Academy McKinley Park spoke up in support. The student activists earned the [endorsement of the McKinley Park Development Council](#) and successfully lobbied Ald. George Cardenas to bring the Resolution to a vote in the Committee on Health and Environmental Protection on March 11, 2019. At the time of the vote, the Resolution had 17 aldermanic cosponsors in addition to lead sponsor Alderman Joe Moore (49th ward).

"It's time to end the partisan divide and make climate change a bridge issue instead of a wedge issue," said Emily Church, an author of the resolution. "Carbon Fee and Dividend is the policy that finds the common ground between Republicans and Democrats and stands the best chance of being enacted by Congress."

Cities having already passed similar Resolutions include San Francisco, CA; Philadelphia, PA; Dallas, TX; Portland, OR; Oak Park, IL; Bloomington, Indiana; Fayetteville, AR; Rice Lake, WI; and Berkeley, CA.

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Citizens' Climate Lobby (CCL) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, grassroots organization that seeks to create the political will for climate solutions by enabling individual breakthroughs in the exercise of personal and political power.