

RESOLUTION

NO. R-22-219

CITY HALL: May 19, 2022

BY: COUNCILMEMBER MORENO

SECONDED BY:

A RESOLUTION urging the prohibition of underground storage of carbon dioxide and facilities for that purpose.

WHEREAS, the people and environment of New Orleans are threatened by climate change, the effects of which include rising sea level, stronger storms, extended periods of extreme heat, and forceful tornadoes; and

WHEREAS, Section 2-202(10) of the City of New Orleans Home Rule Charter establishes a Bill of Rights which affirms “[t]he natural resources of the City and the healthful, scenic, historic, and aesthetic quality of the municipal environment shall be protected, conserved, and replenished insofar as possible consistent with the health, safety, and welfare of the people”; and

WHEREAS, in furtherance of this protection, the City Council and mayoral administrations have enacted legal requirements and directed funds to strengthen the climate resilience of neighborhoods and critical assets, as well as to mitigate the impacts of climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions from the energy, transportation, and waste management sectors; and

WHEREAS, the City Council established the first Renewable and Clean Portfolio Standard in the Southeast Region of the United States, which requires 100% of the electricity supplied to New Orleans to be generated from solar, wind, and non-carbon sources of energy by 2050; and

WHEREAS, Governor John Bel Edwards and members of the Climate Initiative Task Force are to be commended for developing the “Louisiana Climate Action Plan” to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions in Louisiana by 2050 based on the level of emissions in 2005; and

WHEREAS, the “Louisiana Climate Action Plan” recommends the deployment of projects to collect, transport, and dispose underground carbon dioxide waste streams from power plants and other industries, which are referred to as “carbon capture and storage (CCS)” and “carbon capture, utilization, and storage (CCUS)”; this plan cautions that “Louisiana also needs to be assured that the deployment of CCUS technologies in the state be pursued in a safe and responsible manner that does not negatively impact communities, ecosystems, and cultural

resources” and proposes “to establish a regulatory and legal framework that supports responsible deployment of CCUS technologies” that includes “further assessment . . . to fully understand potential impacts of CCUS”; and

WHEREAS, the caution set forth in the “Louisiana Climate Action Plan” is warranted as scientific studies have identified the risks of groundwater contamination and seismic activity from the underground injection and disposal of carbon dioxide, as well as the potential for pipeline leaks and ruptures in the transport of carbon dioxide; and

WHEREAS, at present, a growing number of companies are proposing CCUS and CCS projects in Louisiana in the absence of assuring community safety, assessing the risks, or establishing a regulatory framework as recommended in the “Louisiana Climate Action Plan”; and

WHEREAS, CCUS and CCS are technologies that are not proven to mitigate climate change by effectively removing carbon dioxide emissions from power plants and other industrial facilities; and

WHEREAS, the White House Environmental Justice Advisory Council concluded that CCUS and CCS projects will not benefit communities; and

WHEREAS, CCUS and CCS technologies often act to enable, not diminish, carbon emissions, create counter-incentives to emissions reductions and occupy valuable resources that could otherwise be directed towards real decarbonization and carbon-free technologies; and

WHEREAS, it is widely known and of deep concern that industrial wells in Louisiana remain poorly managed and ineffectively regulated with damaging effects on nearby communities and the environment, and there is no guarantee that introducing a new category of underground wells to store millions of tons of carbon dioxide waste can be safely managed;
NOW THEREFORE

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEW ORLEANS, That the Council hereby acts to preserve our environment, natural resources, and public health by prohibiting the deployment of any carbon capture and storage (CCS) project or any carbon capture, utilization, and storage (CCUS) project in the City of New Orleans.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEW ORLEANS, That the City Council calls on the City to prohibit the buildout of any CCS or CCUS infrastructure, including any pipeline to transport carbon dioxide, in the City of New Orleans.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the City Council resolves to prohibit the use of any municipal fund or municipal tax incentive to financially support any CCS or CCUS project.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the City Council encourages Governor John Bel Edwards to diligently pursue efforts to transition Louisiana to a renewable energy economy that includes expanding access, usage and development of renewable energy with battery storage technologies for the benefit of the people of Louisiana and the protection of our environment.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a certified copy of this resolution be sent by the Governor John Bel Edwards; Mayor LaToya Cantrell; Secretary Thomas Harris, Louisiana Department of Natural Resources; Dr. Chuck Carr Brown, Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality; Secretary Jennifer Granholm, US Department of Energy; Michael Regan, Administrator of the US Environmental Protection Agency; Dr. Earthea Nance, Region 6 Administrator of the US Environmental Protection Agency; Richard Glick, Chair of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission; Brenda Mallory, Chair of the White House Council on Environmental Quality; and Gina McCarthy, National Climate Advisor of the White House Office of Domestic Climate Policy.

THE FOREGOING RESOLUTION WAS READ IN FULL, THE ROLL WAS CALLED ON THE ADOPTION THEREOF, AND RESULTED AS FOLLOWS:

YEAS:

NAYS:

ABSENT:

AND THE RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED.