

COMMISSION FILE NO: 17-085-9 **DATE INTRODUCED:** September 11, 2017

INTRODUCED BY: Executive Director (Signature on File in the Office of the Commission)

REFERRED BY COMMISSION CHAIRPERSON TO: Policy, Finance, and Personnel Committee

RELATING TO: Resolution Expressing Support for the Principles of the 2016 Paris Climate Agreement and District Efforts to Mitigate the Potential Impacts of Climate Change on Public Health, Flood-related Property Damage, and District Facilities in the Region

SUMMARY:

The Commission is requested to adopt a resolution supporting the principles of the 2016 Paris Climate Agreement and reaffirm the District's commitment to reducing its greenhouse gas emissions and playing a leadership role in mitigating the potential impacts of climate change on the well being of current and future generations.

The purpose of the Paris Agreement is to bring all nations into a common cause to combat climate change and to adapt to its effects. The Paris Climate Agreement has been signed by 195 countries, including the United States of America, with the goal to hold the increase in global average temperature to well below 3.6 degrees Fahrenheit or 2.0 degrees Celsius above preindustrial levels through a framework to reduce manmade greenhouse gas emissions.

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration's Global Climate Change team has compiled multiple studies published in peer-reviewed scientific journals that show that 97 percent or more of actively publishing climate scientists agree that climate warming trends over the past century are extremely likely due to human activities. In addition, most leading scientific organizations worldwide, numbering nearly 200, have issued public statements endorsing this position. The world's scientific community has concluded that an increase in atmospheric temperatures above those referenced would result in catastrophic impacts, including more devastating floods and droughts, rising sea levels, widespread food, water shortages, and more powerful storms.

ATTACHMENTS: **BACKGROUND** ☐ **KEY ISSUES** ☐ **RESOLUTION** ☒
FISCAL NOTE ☐ **S/W/MBE** ☐ **OTHER** ☐ _____

PFP_Climate_Change_legislative_filed.docx
08-24-17

COMMITTEE ACTION: _____ **DATE:** _____

COMMISSION ACTION: _____ **DATE:** _____

SUMMARY (Cont'd)

Resolution Expressing Support for the Principles of the 2016 Paris Climate Agreement and District Efforts to Mitigate the Potential Impacts of Climate Change on Public Health, Flood-related Property Damage, and District Facilities in the Region

The Great Lakes Integrated Sciences and Assessments is a part of a national collaboration, including the University of Michigan and Michigan State University, funded by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration that focuses on adaptation to climate change and variability. Its publication, *Climate Change in the Great Lakes Region*, reported that, since 1900, in the Great Lakes Region, annual average temperatures have increased by 2.0 degrees Fahrenheit and total annual precipitation has increased by 10.8% with both trends expected to continue to increase in the future. It also found that the amount of precipitation falling in the heaviest one percent storms increased by 37% in the Midwest from 1958 through 2012.

A technical memo prepared for the District's Kinnickinnic River Flood Management Project found that, during nearly 80 years of Milwaukee rainfall records, half of the top 10 largest storm events have occurred within the past 20 years. The memo stated that, although this did not definitively demonstrate that Milwaukee area has experienced an increase in extreme storms in recent years, it does indicate that there have been numerous recent extreme events.

RESOLUTION

Resolution Expressing Support for the Principles of the 2016 Paris Climate Agreement and District Efforts to Mitigate the Potential Impacts of Climate Change on Public Health, Flood-related Property Damage, and District Facilities in the Region

WHEREAS, the Paris Climate Agreement was signed in 2016 by 195 countries, including the United States of America, with the goal to hold the increase in global average temperature to well below 3.6 degrees Fahrenheit or 2.0 degrees Celsius above preindustrial levels through a framework to reduce manmade greenhouse gas emissions; and

WHEREAS, a consensus of the world's scientific community has concluded that an increase of this level of atmospheric temperatures would result in catastrophic impacts, including more devastating floods and droughts, rising sea levels, widespread food, water shortages, and more powerful storms; and

WHEREAS, National Aeronautics and Space Administration and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration scientists agree that 2016 was the warmest year on record and that eight of the 12 months in 2016 were the warmest on record for those respective months; and

WHEREAS, the planet's average surface temperature has risen about 2.0 degrees Fahrenheit (1.1 degrees Celsius) since the late 19th century with 16 of the 17 warmest years on record occurring since 2001; and

WHEREAS, since 1900, in the United States Great Lakes Region, annual average temperatures have increased by 2.0 degrees Fahrenheit and total annual precipitation has increased by 10.8% with both trends expected to continue to increase in the future; and

WHEREAS, the amount of precipitation falling in the heaviest one percent storms increased by 37% in the Midwest from 1958 through 2012; and

WHEREAS, in nearly 80 years of Milwaukee rainfall records, half of the top 10 largest storm events have occurred within the past 20 years; and

WHEREAS, the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District is responsible for protecting public health and the public drinking water supply through its water reclamation and flood management services for about 1.1 million people in 28 communities in the Milwaukee region; and

WHEREAS, more than 1,290 structures in the Milwaukee region are located within the high hazard floodplain; and

RESOLUTION (Cont'd)

Resolution Expressing Support for the Principles of the 2016 Paris Climate Agreement and District Efforts to Mitigate the Potential Impacts of Climate Change on Public Health, Flood-related Property Damage, and District Facilities in the Region

WHEREAS, in response to the potential impacts of climate change, the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District is creating an internal risk analysis process that characterizes near-, mid- and long-term actions necessary to protect the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District's existing investments in facilities and to create new facilities, programs, and operational improvements that adapt to the wet weather impacts of climate change making the region more resilient in the face of intense storms; and

WHEREAS, to help to mitigate climate change impacts on surface water, groundwater, and aquatic habitat, the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District is aggressively pursuing climate change strategies that emphasize the use of renewable energy, energy efficiency, and the expansion of green infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, citizens can help in the fight against climate change through simple ways to reduce their own carbon footprints such as improving insulation in their homes to save power, driving fewer miles, wasting less food, and reducing airplane travel.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage Commission, that Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District supports the principles of the Paris Climate Agreement and stands with other water-related utilities, public and private sector partners, and citizens throughout the world in committing to play an active leadership role to reduce the combustion of fossil fuels and the release of greenhouse gases and mitigate their impact on the well-being of current and future generations.

FURTHER RESOLVED, by the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage Commission, that the Executive Director of Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District shall send copies of this resolution to the President of the United States, members of the region's Congressional delegation, the heads of appropriate federal agencies, the Secretary of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, and all mayors and village presidents in the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District's sewer service area.