Resolution urging the United States Congress to enact a revenue-neutral carbon tax.

WHEREAS, The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has stated in its recently released 5th Assessment Report, *Climate Change 2013: The Physical Science Basis*, that “Warming of the climate system is unequivocal,” and “It is extremely likely that human influence has been the dominant cause of the observed warming since the mid-20th century;” and

WHEREAS, In May of 2013, the global atmospheric concentration of CO2 reached 400 parts per million—the highest level in the last 800,000 years; and

WHEREAS, In May of 2014, two separate scientific papers were published in the journals *Science* and *Geophysical Research Letter* that documented dramatic retreats of Antarctic glaciers and predicted that large-scale destruction of the West Antarctic ice sheet was likely now inevitable and would lead to sea level rises of ten feet or more; and

WHEREAS, The 2004 *Climate Action Plan for San Francisco* found that continued warming of the atmosphere would cause San Francisco to experience flooding; threats to City infrastructure, the sewage system, Bay wetlands, and marine life; as increased asthma and respiratory illness due to higher ozone levels; increased insurance and mitigation costs; and negative impacts to the fishing and tourism industries; and

WHEREAS, Conservative estimates by the world’s climate scientists state that to achieve climate stabilization and avoid cataclysmic climate change, emissions of greenhouse gases (GHGs) must be brought to 80% below 1990 levels by 2050; and

WHEREAS, The Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 commits the State of California to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels by 2020, and the Governor’s Executive
Order S-3-05 further calls on the State establishes as State policy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions 80% below 1990 levels by 2050; and

WHEREAS, The City and County of San Francisco Board of Supervisors adopted Resolution No. 158-02 committing the City and County of San Francisco to a greenhouse gas emissions reductions goal of 20% below 1990 levels by the year 2012; and

WHEREAS, Under Resolution No. 158-02, the Mayor and Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco actively support the Kyoto Protocol; and

WHEREAS, The failure of the world’s nations to ratify the Kyoto Protocol or any other meaningful climate regulations combined with escalating impacts of climate change demonstrate that broader, more powerful policies are needed to supplement local and regional efforts to reduce emissions; and

WHEREAS, Presently the environmental, health, and social costs of carbon emissions are not included in prices paid for fossil fuels, but rather these externalized costs are borne directly and indirectly by all Americans and global citizens; and

WHEREAS, To begin to correct this market failure, Congress can enact a national carbon tax on fossil fuels, based on the amount of CO2 the fuel will emit when burned; and

WHEREAS, For efficient administration, fossil fuels can be taxed once, as far upstream in the economy as practical, or at the port of entry into the United States; and

WHEREAS, A national, revenue-neutral carbon tax starting at a relatively low rate and increasing steadily over future years is a market-based solution that would minimally disrupt the economy while sending a clear and predictable price signal to businesses to develop and use non-carbon-based energy resources; and

WHEREAS, The Citizens’ Climate Education Corporation (CCEC) contracted a third party, Regional Economic Modeling, Inc. (REMI) to do a nation-wide macroeconomic study on the impact of a revenue-neutral carbon tax; and
WHEREAS, REMI's study predicted that, after 10 years, a revenue-neutral carbon tax would lead to a decrease in CO2 emissions by 33 percent, an increase in national employment of 2.1 million jobs, and an average monthly dividend for a family of four of $288; and

WHEREAS, Border adjustments—carbon content-based tariffs on products imported from countries without comparable carbon pricing, and refunds to our exporters of carbon taxes paid—can maintain the competitiveness of U.S. businesses in global markets; and

WHEREAS, A national carbon tax can be implemented quickly and efficiently, and respond to the urgency of the climate crisis, because the federal government already has in place mechanisms, such as the Internal Revenue Service, needed to implement and enforce the tax, and already collects taxes from fossil fuel producers and importers; and

WHEREAS, A national carbon tax would make the United States a leader in mitigating climate change and in the clean energy technologies of the 21st Century, and would incentivize other countries to enact similar carbon taxes, reducing global CO2 emissions without the need for complex international agreements; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco urges the United States Congress to enact without delay a tax on carbon-based fossil fuels; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the tax should be collected once, as far upstream in the economy as practical, or at the port of entry into the United States; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the tax 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; and, be it

Supervisors Avalos, Breed, Mar, Yee
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
FURTHER RESOLVED, That all tax revenue should be returned to households to protect low and middle income Americans from the impact of rising prices due to the tax; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the international competitiveness of U. S. businesses should be protected by using carbon content-based border tariffs and tax refunds.
Resolution urging the United States Congress to enact a revenue-neutral carbon tax.

September 09, 2014 Board of Supervisors - ADOPTED
Ayes: 11 - Avalos, Breed, Campos, Chiu, Cohen, Farrell, Kim, Mar, Tang, Wiener and Yee

File No. 140930

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED on 9/9/2014 by the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco.

Angela Calvillo
Clerk of the Board

Unsigned
Mayor

9/19/14
Date Approved

I hereby certify that the foregoing resolution, not being signed by the Mayor within the time limit as set forth in Section 3.103 of the Charter, or time waived pursuant to Board Rule 2.14.2, became effective without his approval in accordance with the provision of said Section 3.103 of the Charter or Board Rule 2.14.2.

Angela Calvillo
Clerk of the Board