#69

RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF CHOSEN FREEHOLDERS
COUNTY OF ESSEX

RESOLUTION NO. R-2015-00829 **AUTHORITY FOR RESOLUTION** N.J.S.A. 40:41A-38(q)
PROPOSED BY: ACCLAMATION
SUBJECT:

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 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, National Academy of Sciences has stated that "It is now more certain than ever, based on many lines of evidence, that humans are changing Earth's climate. The atmosphere and oceans have warmed, accompanied by sea-level rise, a strong decline in Arctic sea ice, and other climate-related changes."

WHEREAS, the global atmospheric concentration of C02 has now surpassed 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 2014 National Climate Assessment found that continued warming of the atmosphere will cause New Jersey to experience heat waves; sea-level rise; flooding; threats to infrastructure; and harms to agriculture; 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 Essex County Board of Freeholders declares that climate change poses threats to New Jersey and Essex County and that it supports efforts to address climate change; 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 C02 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 (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 C02 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, the study also states 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, it is believed 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, it is further believed 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 C02 emissions without the need for complex international agreements; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Essex County Board of Freeholders urges the United States Congress to enact without delay a tax on carbon-based fossil fuels; and, be it 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; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be distributed to U.S. Senators Robert Menendez and Cory Booker, U.S. Representatives Albio Sires; Leonard Lance; William J. Pascrell; Donald M. Payne, Jr.; and Rodney P. Frelinghysen and the Essex County Legislative Delegation.

Approved as to form and legality _____
Freeholder Counsel

RECORD OF VOTE (X=Vote N.V.=Abstention ABS=Absent)

Moved by Freeholder Sebold
Second by Freeholder Toro

Freeholder	Yes	No	N.V.	ABS	Freeholder	Yes	No.	N.V.	ABS
BOBADILLA	X				RICHARDSON	X			
GILL, V.P.	X				SEBOLD	X			
JOHNSON	X				TORO	X			
JONES	X								
LUCIANO	X				TIMBERLAKE, PRES.	X			

It is hereby certified that the foregoing Resolution was ( ) adopted ( ) defeated ( ) tabled by roll call vote at a Regular meeting of the Board of Chosen Freeholders of the County of Essex, New Jersey held on October 14, 2015

Is Publication Required ( ) Yes ( ) No

Date Published _____

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Britnee N. Timberlake, President