

CITY OF OAKLAND



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OCT 12 PM 4:12

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Date: October 12, 2017
To: City Council
From: Councilmember Kaplan
Re: RESOLUTION URGING PACIFIC GAS AND ELECTRIC TO ALLOW THE CITY
TO SET UTILITY USER TAXES BASED ON GREENHOUSE GAS POLLUTION

Dear Colleagues on the City Council and Members of the Public,

As we know, climate change caused by global warming-related greenhouse gas emissions including carbon dioxide (CO₂) already is leading to large-scale problems including: rising sea levels; more frequent, extreme, and damaging weather events; more frequent and intense wildfires; disrupted ecosystems affecting biodiversity and food production; and an increase in heat related deaths.

Humans burning carbon-based fossil fuels — coal, oil, and natural gas— is the primary cause of the substantial and continuing increase of CO₂ in the atmosphere, and this requires more powerful policies to reduce emissions.

Currently, Pacific Gas & Electric's (PG&E) billing system does not allow Utility User Tax (UUT) rates to reflect greenhouse pollution. Restructuring Oakland's UUT rates to reflect greenhouse pollution could further incentivize greenhouse reductions. For this reason, I am introducing this Resolution urging PG&E to upgrade its billing system to allow the City of Oakland to set different UUT rates on electricity and natural gas to reflect greenhouse pollution.

We urge you to support this Resolution, which will be heard at the Public Works Committee on October 24, 2017.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rebecca Kaplan".

Councilmember At-Large Rebecca Kaplan

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Approved as to Form and Legality

DRAFT

Deputy City Attorney

OAKLAND CITY COUNCIL

RESOLUTION No. _____ C.M.S.

Introduced by Councilmember Kaplan

RESOLUTION URGING PACIFIC GAS AND ELECTRIC TO ALLOW THE CITY TO SET UTILITY USER TAXES BASED ON GREENHOUSE GAS POLLUTION

WHEREAS, the average surface temperature on Earth has been increasing steadily, with the ten warmest years ever recorded all occurring since 1998; and

WHEREAS, climate scientists overwhelmingly agree that an increase in greenhouse gases in the atmosphere—carbon dioxide (CO₂) in particular—is causing the increase in global temperature; and

WHEREAS, humans burning carbon-based fossil fuels—coal, oil, and natural gas—is the primary cause of the substantial and continuing increase of CO₂ in the atmosphere; and

WHEREAS, the Environmental Protection Agency has determined that current and future greenhouse gas concentrations endanger public health; and according to the Global Humanitarian Forum, climate change is already responsible every year for some 300,000 deaths, 325 million people seriously affected, and economic losses worldwide of U.S. \$125 billion; and

WHEREAS, climate change caused by global warming-related greenhouse gas emissions including CO₂ already is leading to large-scale problems including: ocean acidification and rising sea levels; more frequent, extreme, and damaging weather events such as heat waves, storms, heavy rainfall and flooding, and droughts; more frequent and intense wildfires; disrupted ecosystems affecting biodiversity and food production; and an increase in heat related deaths; and

WHEREAS, scientists have concluded that by 2100 as many as one in 10 species may be on the verge of extinction due to climate change; and

WHEREAS, rising sea levels, reduced snow pack in the Sierras, and extreme weather are issues that are beginning to affect the San Francisco Bay Area; sea level rise in the Bay Area is expected to increase by sixteen inches by 2050 and fifty-five inches by 2100; and miles of shoreline and parks could be underwater, which could result in \$62 billion worth of infrastructure damage in

the Bay Area; and

WHEREAS, the City of Oakland has been a leader in the fight against climate change, having adopted an Energy & Climate Action Plan in 2012, which aims to reduce the City's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to 36% below 2005 emission levels by 2020; and

WHEREAS, the continued increase in global atmospheric CO2 concentration requires broader, more powerful policies to reduce emissions; and

WHEREAS, as electricity continues to become cleaner with the increase in renewable sources and the implementation of the East Bay Community Energy program, policymakers are looking for ways to eliminate natural gas usage to further reduce greenhouse pollution from building energy use; and

WHEREAS, restructuring Oakland's utility user tax (UUT) rates to reflect greenhouse pollution could further incentivize greenhouse reductions; and

WHEREAS, Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) currently collects Oakland's UUT on electricity and natural gas at the same rate, and their billing system does not currently have the capability to tax them differently; and

WHEREAS, an updated PG&E billing system could efficiently connect greenhouse emissions to the usage of both natural gas and electricity usage; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That the Oakland City Council hereby urges Pacific Gas and Electric to upgrade its billing system to allow the City to set different utility user tax rates on electricity and natural gas to reflect greenhouse pollution.

IN COUNCIL, OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA, _____

PASSED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES - BROOKS, CAMPBELL WASHINGTON, GALLO, GIBSON MCELHANEY, GUILLEN, KALB, KAPLAN,
AND PRESIDENT REID

NOES -

ABSENT -

ABSTENTION -

ATTEST: _____

LaTonda Simmons
City Clerk and Clerk of the Council
of the City of Oakland, California