**ABTS 7.20.19**

***A Resolution in Support of the Declaration of a Climate Emergency by Big Ten Undergraduate Student Governments***

**Sponsors: University of Iowa**

**A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE DECLARATION OF A CLIMATE EMERGENCY BY BIG TEN UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT GOVERNMENTS**

**WHEREAS**, on April 22, 2016, world leaders from 175 countries recognized the threat of climate change and the urgent need to combat it by signing the Paris Agreement, agreeing to keep warming “well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels” and to “pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C,” which is in itself not safe for humanity;[[1]](#footnote-1)

**WHEREAS**, on October 8, 2018, the United Nations released a special report, which projected that limiting warming to the unsafe 1.5°C target this century will require an unprecedented transformation of every sector of the global economy over the next 12 years;[[2]](#footnote-2)

**WHEREAS**, on November 23, 2018 the Federal Government issued a climate study detailing the massive threat that climate change poses and underscoring the need for immediate climate emergency action at all levels [[3]](#footnote-3)

**WHEREAS**, climate change and the global economy’s overshoot of ecological limits are driving the sixth mass extinction of species, which has caused a 60% decline in global wildlife populations since 1970, could devastate much of life on Earth for the next 10 million years, and may pose as great a risk to humanity as climate change, according to the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services; [[4]](#footnote-4)

**WHEREAS**, restoring a safe and stable climate requires a whole-of-society “Climate Mobilization” at all levels of society on a large scale to decrease greenhouse gas emissions across all sectors at emergency speed, to rapidly and safely drawdown or remove all the excess carbon from the atmosphere, to end the 6th mass extinction of species, and to implement measures to protect all people and species from the increasingly severe consequences of climate change;[[5]](#footnote-5)

**WHEREAS**, marginalized populations in the B1G community and worldwide, including people of color, immigrants, indigenous communities, low-income individuals, and people with disabilities, and the unhoused are already disproportionately affected by the effects of climate change, and will continue to bear an excess burden as temperatures increase, oceans rise, and disasters worsen; 5

**WHEREAS**, this unprecedented mobilization effort addresses the full suite of existential ecological threats facing humanity in a comprehensive, integrated and timely fashion; 5

**WHEREAS**, a growing list of cities, districts and counties across the world representing over 15 million people collectively have recently declared or officially acknowledged the existence of a global climate emergency, including Berkeley, Hoboken, Los Angeles, Montgomery County, Oakland, Richmond, and Santa Cruz in the United States; Ballarat, Byron Shire, Darebin, Moreland, London, Stroud, the Forest of Dean and Totnes in the United Kingdom;5

**WHEREAS**, B1G Community can act as a national leader by both converting to an ecologically, socially, and economically regenerative community at emergency speed, and by rapidly organizing a climate emergency mobilization effort;

**WHEREAS**, higher education must confront these threats and take action to address social and ecological disruption and address its contribution to the catastrophic loss of the planet’s biodiversity and worsening effects of climate change by leaving a generation unprepared for the ecological and social crises ahead.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, B1G Student Governments declare a climate emergency due to threats to our cities, regions, states, nation, civilization, humanity, and the natural world

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** B1G Student Governments commit to an internal set of sustainability goals which advocate for sustainable practices among members, as well as an executive sustainability position and a sustainability component into each B1G Undergraduate Student Government constitution and/or bylaws.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** B1G Student Governments commit to calling on higher levels of B1G Administration to provide a commitment to climate change action, including advocacy for the creation of climate change action/sustainability goals that are university wide in partnership with relevant sustainability experts on campus.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, B1G Student Governments commit to keeping the concerns of vulnerable communities central to all just transition and climate emergency mobilization planning processes and to inviting and encouraging such communities to actively participate in order to advocate directly for their needs;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, B1G calls on the United States Federal Government, and all governments and peoples worldwide, to initiate an immediate social and economic mobilization to reverse global warming and ecological overshoot that restores near pre-industrial global average temperatures and greenhouse gas concentrations, immediately halts the development of all new fossil fuel infrastructure, rapidly phases out the use of fossil fuels and the technologies which rely upon them, ends greenhouse gas emissions as quickly as possible, initiates an effort to safely draw down the excess carbon from the atmosphere, ends the sixth mass extinction of species, with comprehensive benefits for all those who will be impacted by this emergency response;5

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, the B1G Student Governments shall submit a copy of this resolution to relevant administrative, city, state, officials and request that all relevant support and assistance in effectuating this resolution be provided.

1. “Climate Change - United Nations Sustainable Development.” United Nations, United Nations, www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/climate-change/. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. . “Special Climate Report: 1.5ºC Is Possible But Requires Unprecedented and Urgent Action - United Nations Sustainable Development.” United Nations, United Nations, www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/blog/2018/10/special-climate-report-1-5oc-is-possible-but-requires-unprecedented-and-urgent-action/. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. “New Federal Climate Assessment for U.S. Released.” New Federal Climate Assessment for U.S. Released | National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, www.noaa.gov/news/new-federal-climate-assessment-for-us-released. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. “UN Report: Nature's Dangerous Decline 'Unprecedented'; Species Extinction Rates 'Accelerating' - United Nations Sustainable Development.” United Nations, United Nations, www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/blog/2019/05/nature-decline-unprecedented-report/. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Climate Emergency Team. “Climate Emergency Campaign.” The Climate Mobilization, www.theclimatemobilization.org/climate-emergency-campaign. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)