

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY JUNE 13, 2016

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2015–16 REGULAR SESSION

Assembly Joint Resolution

No. 43

Introduced by Assembly ~~Members Bonilla and Williams~~ *Member Williams*

June 6, 2016

Assembly Joint Resolution No. 43—Relative to greenhouse gases.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL’S DIGEST

AJR 43, as amended, ~~Bonilla Williams~~. Greenhouse gases: climate change.

This measure would urge the United States Congress to enact ~~federal policies to further the effort to combat climate change~~; *a tax on carbon-based fossil fuels*.

Fiscal committee: no.

1 WHEREAS, The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
2 has stated in its recently released 5th Assessment Report, Climate
3 Change 2013: The Physical Science Basis, that “[w]arming of the
4 climate system is unequivocal” and “[i]t is extremely likely that
5 human influence has been the dominant cause of the observed
6 warming since the mid-20th century”; and
7 WHEREAS, In May of 2013, the global atmospheric
8 concentration of carbon dioxide reached 400 parts per million, the
9 highest level in the last 800,000 years; and
10 WHEREAS, In May 2014, two separate scientific papers were
11 published in journals of Geophysical Research Letters documenting
12 dramatic retreats of Antarctic glaciers and predicting that
13 large-scale destruction of the West Antarctic ice sheets is likely

1 now inevitable and will lead to sea level rises of 10 feet or more;
2 and

3 WHEREAS, The 2013 Indicators of Climate Change in
4 California, released by the Office of Environmental Health Hazard
5 Assessment, found that continued warming of the atmosphere
6 would cause threats of flooding along the coastline of California;
7 threats to infrastructure, sewage systems, wetlands, and marine
8 life; increased ocean acidification; increased threats from wildfires;
9 threats to the water supply from decreased snow packs; increased
10 asthma and respiratory illness due to higher ozone levels; increased
11 insurance and mitigation costs; and negative impacts to the
12 agriculture, fishing, and tourism industries; and

13 WHEREAS, Conservative estimates by climate scientists
14 throughout the world state that, to achieve climate stabilization
15 and avoid cataclysmic climate change, emissions of greenhouse
16 gases must be brought to 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050;
17 and

18 WHEREAS, The California Global Warming Solutions Act of
19 2006 (Division 25.5 (commencing with Section 38500) of the
20 Health and Safety Code) commits the state to reduce greenhouse
21 gas emissions to 1990 levels by 2020, and the Governor's
22 Executive Order S-3-05 further calls on the state to establish a
23 policy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 80 percent below
24 1990 levels by 2050; and

25 WHEREAS, The California Global Warming Solution Act of
26 2006 has reached its 10-year anniversary and the California
27 economy remains strong; and

28 WHEREAS, The United States needs powerful new policies to
29 meet its greenhouse gas emission reduction goals established in
30 the 2015 Paris Climate Agreement; ~~now, therefore, be it and~~

31 *WHEREAS, The United States Congress can enact a national*
32 *carbon tax on fossil fuels, based on the amount of carbon dioxide*
33 *the fuel will emit when burned; and*

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

37 *WHEREAS, A national, revenue-neutral carbon tax starting at*
38 *a relatively low rate and increasing steadily over future years is*
39 *a market-based solution that would minimally disrupt the economy*

1 while sending a clear and predictable price signal to businesses
2 to develop and use noncarbon-based energy resources; and

3 WHEREAS, Citizens' Climate Education Corporation
4 Commissioned Regional Economic Models, Inc. (REMI) to do a
5 nation-wide macroeconomic study on the impact of a
6 revenue-neutral carbon tax; and

7 WHEREAS, REMI's study predicted that, after 10 years, a
8 revenue-neutral carbon tax would lead to a decrease in carbon
9 dioxide emissions by 33 percent, an increase in national
10 employment by 2.1 million jobs, and an average monthly dividend
11 for a family of four of \$288; and

12 WHEREAS, Border adjustments, such as carbon-content-based
13 tariffs on products imported from countries without comparable
14 carbon pricing and refunds to our exporters of carbon taxes paid
15 can maintain the competitiveness of United States businesses in
16 global markets; and

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

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

29 Resolved by the Assembly and the Senate of the State of
30 California, jointly, That the Legislature hereby urges the United
31 States Congress to enact federal policies that mirror the California
32 Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 to further the effort to
33 combat climate change throughout the United States; enact, without
34 delay, a tax on carbon-based fossil fuels; and be it further

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

38 RESOLVED, That the tax rate should start low and increase
39 steadily and predictably to achieve the goal of reducing carbon

1 *dioxide emissions in the United States to 80 percent below 1990*
2 *levels by 2050; and be it further*

3 *RESOLVED, That all tax revenue should be returned to middle-*
4 *and low-income Americans to protect them from the impact of*
5 *rising prices due to the tax; and, be it further*

6 *RESOLVED, That the international competitiveness of United*
7 *States businesses should be protected by using*
8 *carbon-content-based tariffs and tax refunds; and be it further*

9 *Resolved, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies*
10 *of this resolution to the President and Vice President of the United*
11 *States, to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, to the*
12 *Majority Leader of the Senate, to each Senator and Representative*
13 *from California in the Congress of the United States, and to the*
14 *author for appropriate distribution.*

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