

Resolution on Climate Change

Whereas: Section 9, Item a, of the Illinois PTA Legislation Platform states that the Illinois PTA promotes and supports improved legislation that will set and enforce standards and appropriate funds that are adequate to control air, water and noise pollution, and other environmental deterioration within the state; and

Whereas: According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), “global warming” refers to the recent and ongoing rise in global average temperature near earth’s surface caused predominantly by increasing concentrations of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere leading to changes in climate patterns, and “climate change” refers to any significant change in the measures of climate (including changes in temperature, precipitation, or wind patterns) that lasts for an extended period of time of decades or longer; and

Whereas: According to the EPA, the National Aeronautics Space Administration (NASA), and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change of the United Nations, human activities, including the use of fossil fuels, are the predominant cause of global warming and climate change, and the adverse impact of those activities has increased at an unprecedented rate over the past 50 years; and

Whereas: According to joint U.S. agency reports, the changes in climate are likely to adversely impact human health in areas that include, but are not limited to, an increase in:

- Respiratory ailments, including asthma, due to increased exposure to pollen, mold, air pollution, aerosolized marine toxins and dust;
- The incidence of certain cancers due to the increased duration and intensity of ultraviolet radiation;
- Foodborne diseases and nutritional deficiencies due to food contamination, shortages of staple foods, and a reduction in the nutritional value of food due to rising atmospheric carbon dioxide; and
- Human developmental issues as a result of prenatal and early childhood in connection with decreased food supplies, malnutrition and exposure to toxic substances; and

Whereas: According to a 2016 joint U.S. agency report, climate change is likely to lead to an increase in extreme weather events (including heat waves, tornadoes, hurricanes, floods, winter storms, and cold waves) which adversely impact human health, including an increase to injury, disease and death; and

Whereas: According to a 2016 joint U.S. agency report, climate change will likely lead to an increase in infections and disease pathogens in water and food, and via vector-borne means, due to rising sea levels, changes in temperature extremes, changes in seasonal weather patterns, and an increase in extreme precipitation and storms; now therefore be it

Resolved: That the Illinois PTA and its constituent bodies disseminate information with respect to the environmental concerns related to climate change and its impact on the health and welfare of children and youth; and be it further

Resolved: That the Illinois PTA and its constituent bodies strongly urge school districts to: take every reasonable action to include renewable energy sources and sustainable infrastructure when building, renovating or maintaining school district's buildings, facilities and grounds; and to refrain from excessive purchase and use of products and services that contribute to climate change; and be it further

Resolved: That the Illinois PTA will work with other like-minded organizations to raise awareness of the impact of climate change on the environment, health and welfare of children and youth; and be it further

Resolved: That the Illinois PTA and its constituent bodies support additional evaluations and research concerning the impact of climate change by independent researchers and agencies; and be it further

Resolved: That the Illinois PTA and its constituent bodies support legislation that: regulates activities that contribute to adverse climate change; mitigates the negative effects of climate change; supports and encourages the use of renewable energy; and supports efforts to remediate the existing negative impact of climate change; and be it further

Resolved: That, as the issues involved in connection with adverse climate change are a national issue, the Illinois PTA submit this resolution in the appropriate format to the National PTA for consideration by delegates to the 2018 National PTA convention.