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Public Testimony – Resolution No. 220596 - KC Climate Protection & Resiliency Plan

Please, let me begin by noting that I fully support the adoption of Res. #220596 for the proposed Climate Protection and Resiliency Plan (CPRP) without any weakening amendments. I urge you to VOTE YES.

My reasoning is as follows.

What do you think about when you think about the climate crisis? Of course, global warming has to come to mind. The thought of it is sobering, but the truth is that the climate crisis involves more than this - it has deep roots in society's marginalization of minority communities. In order to build a more just and sustainable world, we must shift priorities to create more inclusive climate action, which includes:

- Acknowledging the boundaries of planetary resources.
- Managing our interconnectedness to uplift our economic systems.
- Working together with humanity and the environment.

This will lay the groundwork to approach the problem holistically, encompassing **justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (the JEDI approach)**, in order to affect change.

**What is inclusive climate action?** Inclusive climate action is an innovative and systemic approach to address the global climate crisis with JEDI as a priority. It can be done by reducing the effects of climate change on the most marginalized communities, and ensuring the benefits and burdens of climate action are distributed equitably.

This is an approach that will provide economic, environmental and social benefits, the three basic components of sustainability and resilience, for all.

**Why is inclusive climate action important?** Climate change harms not only the environment but also the most vulnerable members of society. These marginalized people take the brunt of the problems of climate change, which are largely created by the privileged members of society. For example, in the US, people of color are disproportionately affected by air pollution, especially in defined urban heat islands, compared to white people.

This is why inclusive climate action is so imperative. It is a roadmap for addressing the environmental crisis and its looming effects on vulnerable groups and the economy first. An inclusive climate action program provides cities with the tools to take action. It provides a platform that will:

- Enhance thoughtful leadership of mayors.
- Improve best practice exchange between cities.
- Better assist cities with ambitious climate action plans.
- Provide greater opportunities for ground-breaking research.

**What are the benefits of inclusive climate action?** When we as a society recognize how the environment and humanity are intertwined, we can begin to improve both. The benefits of inclusive climate action are far-reaching:

**Environmental action – includes:** Clean air and water; Sustainable agriculture and forestry; Climate change mitigation; Awareness of, and willingness to do something about, inequitable social impacts

**Social equity includes** - Improved health and wellbeing; Gender equity; Reduced inequalities.

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**Economic opportunity includes** - Corporate social responsibility; Improved working conditions; Entrepreneurship and new jobs.

These are not hypothetical benefits. There is, for the first time, conscious support by the US federal government to take action now. This year, US President Joe Biden and the U.S. Congress signed into law a plan for the US to be at net-zero carbon emissions by 2050, in addition to the following actions:

- Create one million new jobs to rebuild the country's infrastructure.
- Create one million new jobs developing electric vehicles.
- Generate hundreds of thousands of jobs in climate-smart agriculture.
- Ensure environmental justice.
- Improve the lives of those impacted by climate change.

As more people and businesses recognize their responsibility to the environment and to their fellow community members, they are affecting change. The "C40 Cities" report highlights a few of the ways that communities and governments are starting to make a difference:

- Cape Town's commitment to energy-efficient homes
- New York City's Cool Neighborhoods project to address urban heat islands
- Barcelona's plan for environmental justice
- Los Angeles' BlueLA project for sharing electric cars in low-income neighborhoods

Together, businesses, governments, and communities can choose to:

- Lessen their dependence on fossil fuels
- Embrace sustainable energy solutions such as wind and solar
- Protect rainforests through sustainable practices
- Move to electric vehicles
- Develop a smart grid
- Be more conscious of how they use energy and employ energy efficient methods and materials
- Work with local non-governmental organizations
- Protect those who are directly impacted by inequitable climate practices
- Don't ignore the science of facts

For these and other reasons, again, I urge your support of and vote for Resolution #220596.

Respectfully submitted,



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