Resolution # 70-15
The Graduate and Professional Student Association (GPSA)
The Pennsylvania State University

of the 70th Assembly
October 28, 2020

Be it decided by the Assembly of Elected Delegates,

Climate Action for a Cleaner Penn State
Support for Action by Penn State to Address Climate Change
(Decided: [ Y / N / A ])

Nature of the Situation:

1. Anthropogenic climate change threatens the livelihoods of the entire Penn State community and the State of Pennsylvania. Partly as a result of increases in emissions and concentrations of greenhouse gasses in the past century, Pennsylvania’s climate has undergone a long-term warming of more than 1°C (1.8°F) and has seen a 10 percent increase in the amount of precipitation, with an additional 8 percent increase in precipitation anticipated by 2050. Due to this threat, Penn State has formed several partnerships to create comprehensive climate solutions that align with a target of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 80% below 1990 levels by 2050, including a 25 year Solar Power Purchase Agreement and additional increased use of renewables.

2. However, these plans only address a fraction of Penn State’s overall greenhouse gas emissions and do not take other aspects of sustainability and climate action into consideration. In order to address all aspects of sustainability and climate action, student leaders from across Penn State have created a petition that incorporates several strategies that the Penn State administration could adopt to ensure a more sustainable future for the university and the surrounding community.

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1. https://www.dep.pa.gov/Citizens/climate/Pages/default.aspx
2. http://www.sustainability.psu.edu/climate-action
3. https://psuclimateaction.weebly.com/
strategies would expand upon the current Penn State strategic plan in order to take more aggressive action to better meet targets set by the Paris Agreement.

Recommended Course of Action:

By adopting this resolution, the Graduate and Professional Student Association formally supports the Penn State Climate Action Plan, which calls on the university to consider:

- Reducing greenhouse gas emissions as rapidly as possible, setting a specific date between 2030 and 2040 for reaching net zero emissions.
- Prioritizing research efforts into carbon-capture technology, agricultural carbon sequestration, and carbon neutral fuels, and using our institutional partnerships to accelerate their deployment.
- Divesting from fossil fuels and investing in the green economy, especially energy efficiency, renewable energy sources, and zero-emissions transportation.
- Reallocating a portion of the existing student fee towards sustainability initiatives.
- Improving efforts to incorporate sustainability education into existing curriculum.
- Recognizing that food demand and agriculture play a large role in contributing to greenhouse gas emissions and incorporate sustainability into PSU Food Services goals and operations.
- Creating a Climate Action Committee made up of Penn State experts charged with the capacity to study, set policy, assess, and publish progress on our climate commitments.

Furthermore, the Graduate and Professional Student Association recommends that the university consider the following actions:

- Recognizing climate change has exacerbated systemic racial, social, and economic injustices. Therefore, Penn State should maintain plans to reflect on the diversity of our campus and follow initiatives we previously outlined in Resolution 70-12 (Racial Justice-Black Lives Matter)
- Improving the efficiency of existing active climate change initiatives and actions.

Further, the Executive Board is directed to communicate support of the Climate Action Plan through a statement and directly to members of the Penn State administration and Board of Trustees in conjunction with other student governments at the next available opportunity.

Respectfully submitted,

Alex Zhao
President

Amanda Burton
Delegate, College of Agricultural Sciences

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4 https://psuclimateaction.weebly.com/strategy.html
Yashasvika Duggal
Delegate, Eberly College of Science

Ama Agyapong
At-Large Delegate, Intercollege Graduate Degree Program

President ___________________________________________________  Affirm  Veto

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The Graduate and Professional Student Association