



## Legislation Text

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Clerk 08/01/2017

A MOTION affirming King County's commitment to advance the Paris Climate Agreement and to collaborate with other governments, businesses and community groups to achieve climate change goals.

WHEREAS, On June 1, 2017, the President of the United States announced that the President would formally withdraw the country from the Paris Climate Agreement, and

WHEREAS, the Paris Climate Agreement is an international agreement to prevent the most severe impacts of climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions to limit global temperature rise to well below two degrees Celsius and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to even further to one and five-tenths degrees Celsius, and

WHEREAS, although only national governments can sign onto the Paris Climate Agreement, subnational governments may publicly declare their commitments to climate action, and

WHEREAS, climate change is one of the paramount challenges of our generation and will have near and long-term consequences for the economy, the environment and public health and safety in King County, and

WHEREAS, King County is already experiencing the impacts of a changing climate: warming temperatures; acidifying marine waters; rising sea levels; increasing flooding risk; more-frequent heat events that impact health; decreasing mountain snowpack; and less water in the summer, and

WHEREAS, impacts of a changing climate will not affect all King County residents in the same way. Experiences will vary based on income, health, age and place of residence. Climate change impacts can

magnify existing health issues and limited access to resources that are already experienced disproportionately by communities of color, and

WHEREAS, local governments play a significant role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions through their land use and transportation policy choices, building codes and investments in energy efficiency, renewable energy and clean vehicles, and

WHEREAS, local governments have core responsibilities for protecting public health and safety, preparing for emergencies and sustaining critical infrastructure, and

WHEREAS, local government efforts to confront climate change have more impact when coordinated around shared goals and outcomes and when pursued through public, private and nongovernmental partnerships, and

WHEREAS, in 2014, King County and thirty-nine cities adopted shared regional targets to reduce countywide greenhouse gas emissions twenty-five percent by 2020, fifty percent by 2030 and eighty percent by 2050, against a 2007 baseline, and

WHEREAS King County and thirteen cities whose members represent seventy-five percent of the population of the county are partnering through the King County-Cities Climate Collaboration, and

WHEREAS, in 2015, the King County-Cities Climate Collaboration developed specific, shared action commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions across King County, and

WHEREAS, in 2015, the King County executive and council unanimously adopted a Strategic Climate Action Plan that establishes pathways, priority actions and commitments that the county will carry out in its operations and at the community scale to achieve emission reduction goals, and

WHEREAS, the Strategic Climate Action Plan maps specific pathways and actions needed to achieve the countywide climate goals of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by eighty percent by 2050, against a 2007 baseline, with interim goals of twenty-five percent reduction by 2020 and fifty percent reduction by 2030, and

WHEREAS, the Strategic Climate Action Plan sets renewable energy goals to use one-hundred percent

carbon neutral energy in county operations by 2025, phase out coal by 2025, limit new natural gas development and increase renewable energy use to ninety percent by 2030 at the countywide scale, and

WHEREAS, King County has made significant progress against targets for energy efficiency and renewable energy in its operations, reducing energy use in buildings and facilities by twenty percent since 2007 while achieving more than three and one-half million dollars in annual savings and while producing renewable energy equivalent to its needs for operation of county buildings and facilities, and

WHEREAS, in 2017 the county committed to purchase wind-generated, carbon-free electricity from Puget Sound Energy beginning in 2019 that will reduce direct greenhouse gas emissions from King County government operations by twenty percent, and

WHEREAS, the county has committed to purchase one hundred twenty battery-electric buses by 2020, as part of the transition to a zero-emission fleet by 2034, and is focusing deployment of these buses in communities disproportionately impacted by poor air quality, and

WHEREAS, King County achieved its goal of carbon neutrality for the department of natural resources and parks more than a year ahead of schedule, and

WHEREAS, King County is integrating climate and social equity initiatives, engaging communities on coordinated approaches to health, access to clean energy resources and economic development benefits consistent with the goals of the county's Equity and Social Justice Strategic Plan, and

WHEREAS, King County convened the safe energy leadership alliance in 2014 to protect the health and economies of communities from the risks and impacts of oil and coal transport and of fossil fuel infrastructure siting, and

WHEREAS, today, the safe energy leadership alliance is a coalition of more than one hundred fifty-five elected leaders from four states and British Columbia that is bringing attention to the full risks and impacts of proposed crude oil and coal export to public health and safety, water quality, treaty rights and economic development, and to supporting renewable energy access and development, and

WHEREAS, regional, cross-sector collaboration reduces greenhouse gas emissions and strengthens the county's ability to prepare for the impacts of a changing climate on local communities, infrastructure, economy, public health and safety and the natural environment;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT MOVED by the Council of King County:

A. King County affirms its commitment to work collaboratively to advance the goals of the Paris Climate Agreement and to monitor and transparently report progress on goals for reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

B. King County will continue to pursue the goals and priority actions in its adopted 2015 Strategic Climate Action Plan as well as those developed in partnership with cities through the King County-Cities Climate Collaboration.

C. King County will engage with national and international coalitions of local governments and businesses to share best practices and advocate for state and federal policy frameworks that advance energy efficiency, renewable energy and climate change goals.

D. Consistent with its Equity and Social Justice Strategic Plan, King County will strengthen its engagement with communities facing the greatest impacts from climate change and create opportunities for shared leadership and decision-making to develop solutions and prioritize investments.

E. King County will continue to convene and support the Safe Energy Leadership Alliance and work collaboratively to accelerate renewable energy access and development.