



**CITY OF NEW HAVEN**  
**JUSTIN M. ELICKER**  
**MAYOR**  
**GAGE FRANK**  
*Director of Communications*

**165 CHURCH ST.**  
**NEW HAVEN, CT 06510**  
**O: (203) 946-4933**  
**C: (203) 725-4249**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **New Haven Mayor Announces Climate Task Force**

NEW HAVEN, Conn. – Today, New Haven Mayor Justin Elicker formally announced the formation of the Climate Emergency Mobilization Task Force. The formation of a climate task force was part of a resolution unanimously approved by the New Haven Board of Alders in September of last year. The group will be aimed at tackling climate change in New Haven head-on, including an aim to end community-wide greenhouse gas emissions by or before December 31, 2030, and to initiate an effort to safely draw down carbon from the atmosphere.

“We are in the midst of deeply challenging times and climate change is one of the most pressing challenges as it confronts the very existence of our planet as we know it,” said Mayor Justin Elicker. “The City of New Haven has been working on many different climate initiatives; however, the taskforce will bring focus, advocacy, and support to those and other new initiatives. While it took longer than expected to finalize, we are excited about the membership of the taskforce that includes passionate advocates to keep pushing us to new limits, area experts that bring deep knowledge and community leaders to ensure the community’s voice is prominent at the table,” he concluded.

Below is a full list of members of the Climate Emergency Mobilization Task Force which includes residents and City Staff:

Kai Addae  
Alder Darryl Brackeen  
Joaquin Dominguez  
Kiana Flores  
Karen Jenkins  
Melissa Kops  
Alder Adam Marchand  
Seth Poole  
Linda Reeder  
Alder Carmen Rodriguez  
Jodi Sherman, M.D.  
Latha Swamy  
Brian Thompson  
Michael Twitty  
Giovanni Zinn  
Yining (Tracy) Zhou

The Climate Emergency Mobilization Task Force forms as a result of a unanimously approved New Haven Board of Alders Resolution: *Resolution of the New Haven Board of Alders Endorsing the Declaration of a Climate Emergency to Restore a Safe Climate*. The Task Force commits to educating New Haven residents about the climate emergency and the broader ecological crisis and to helping to catalyze a climate emergency mobilization at the local, state, national, and global levels to protect residents.

“There is no denying the realities of climate change. We see it all around, and even right here in New Haven. I am excited to be on this task force, so that we can work on preserving our environment and cutting our carbon emissions by implementing sustainable practices and providing public awareness on climate change to our greater community” said member Kiana Flores.

The Task force will work with local organizations and communities to include job creation, environmental justice, and public health in project development and to prioritize equitable outcomes, particularly for poor and marginalized communities. The Task Force will soon announce their first meeting, which will be held virtually.

Read the full text of the resolution below:

***RESOLUTION OF THE NEW HAVEN BOARD OF ALDERS ENDORSING THE DECLARATION OF A CLIMATE EMERGENCY TO RESTORE A SAFE CLIMATE.***

*WHEREAS: human activities have warmed the Earth enough to end the 12,000-year period of climate stability that allowed agriculture and human civilization to develop; and*

*WHEREAS: global warming has already set in motion disastrous changes to the Earth system, including accelerating ice mass loss from the Greenland and West Antarctic Ice Sheets and the thawing of the borders of the vast Arctic permafrost, which holds twice as much stored carbon as the entire atmosphere; and*

*WHEREAS: the world is on course for 2C of warming, at which point many scientists believe that this temperature will initiate a chain of self-reinforcing changes (feedback loops) that dramatically accelerate warming (ex: hotter temperatures cause more forest fires, releasing more CO<sub>2</sub>, causing more warming, causing more fires, etc.); and*

*WHEREAS: 73% of Connecticut residents think global warming will harm future generations; and over 80% of Americans think that CO<sub>2</sub> should be regulated as a pollutant; and*

*WHEREAS: NASA scientists have concluded that the complete collapse of the Greenland Ice Sheet alone could raise sea levels 23 feet, creating several billion climate refugees and a “global-scale catastrophe”; and*

*WHEREAS: Connecticut’s biggest climate change risks are intimately linked to its 217 miles of Long Island Sound shoreline, where 40 percent of the population lives in 36 coastal communities that now faces the potentially dangerous combination of rising water levels and more frequent and intense storms; and*

*WHEREAS: over 19,000 scientists have signed a Second Warning to Humanity proclaiming that “a great change in our stewardship of the Earth and the life on it is required, if vast human misery is to be avoided”, and*

*WHEREAS: the economy’s overshoot of a number of ecological limits and, increasingly, climate change, are driving the sixth mass extinction (1000 to 10,000 times above the normal rate) of species, which could devastate much of life on earth for the next 10 million years; and*

*WHEREAS: England’s chief scientific advisor warned that humanity faces a “perfect storm of global events” by 2030 as climate change, population growth, and growing demand for food, energy, and fresh water incite violent conflict over diminishing resources that are essential to human life and dignity; and*

*WHEREAS: climate-fueled droughts, famines, and diseases have already killed millions of people in the Global South, and displaced millions more; and*

*WHEREAS: indigenous and low-income communities and communities of color in the United States and abroad have suffered the gravest consequences of the extractive economy since its inception; and*

*WHEREAS: the destruction caused last year by Hurricanes Harvey and Maria, as well as the record wildfires that devastated Northern California, confirm that the earth is already too hot for safety or justice; and*

*WHEREAS: it is an act of unspeakable injustice and cruelty to knowingly subject our fellow humans now and into the future to societal disintegration, food and clean water shortages, economic collapse, and early death on an increasingly uninhabitable planet; and*

*WHEREAS: Pope Francis has declared that humanity is on the verge of a “global suicide,” and that we will destroy ourselves if we destroy God’s creation; and*

*WHEREAS: common sense and morality dictate that humanity can no longer safely emit greenhouse gases and must seek to restore a safe level of greenhouse gas concentrations and global average temperatures well below today’s levels; and*

*WHEREAS: restoring a safe and stable climate requires an emergency mobilization to a near-zero greenhouse gas emissions economy across all sectors at wartime speed, a global effort to rapidly and safely remove all the excess carbon from the atmosphere, and safe measures to protect all people and species from the consequences of abrupt warming in the near-term; and*

*WHEREAS: reversing ecological overshoot and halting the sixth mass extinction requires an effort to preserve and restore half the Earth’s biodiversity in interconnected wildlife corridors and to humanely stabilize population as well as a shift toward a society that prioritizes conservation, community and mutual aid over consumerism and narcissism; and*

*WHEREAS: justice requires that those countries, classes and sectors that have contributed the most to this global climate and ecological cataclysm foot a commensurate financial burden in reversing it and protecting those most impacted from the lethal impacts underway already; and*

*WHEREAS: New Haven cannot wait for more Superstorm Sandy’s, extreme rain and snow events, and accelerating sea level rise to begin an emergency climate mobilization; and*

*WHEREAS: in present day, New Haven can rise to the challenge of the greatest crisis in history by organizing politically to catalyze a national and global climate emergency effort, employing local workers in a mobilization effort building and installing renewable energy infrastructure, growing local healthy food, restoring ecosystems, and retrofitting and redesigning our built environment, electric grid and transportation systems.*

*NOW BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the City of New Haven declares an existential climate emergency that threatens our city, region, state, nation, civilization, the natural world, and humanity.*

*1. BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the New Haven Board of Alders will work with the Mayor to establish a Climate Emergency Mobilization Task Force no later than 120 days after the effective date of this order.*

*2. BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Climate Emergency Mobilization Task Force will be charged with leading an emergency mobilization effort that, with appropriate financial and regulatory assistance from state and federal authorities, will aim to end community-wide greenhouse gas emissions by or before December 31, 2030, and to initiate an effort to safely draw down carbon from the atmosphere.*

3. *BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Mayor directs all City Departments and proprietaries to report to the Climate Emergency Mobilization Task Force no later than 6 months after the effective date of this order on maximum emergency reductions in greenhouse gas emissions from their operations feasible by the end of 2021, with the highest priority placed on an equitable and just transition to all sectors.*

4. *BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Climate Emergency Mobilization Task Force commits to educating New Haven residents about the climate emergency and the broader ecological crisis and to helping to catalyze a climate emergency mobilization at the local, state, national, and global levels to protect local residents as well as all the people and species of the world.*

5. *BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Climate Emergency Mobilization Task Force commits to work with local organizations and communities to include job creation, environmental justice, and public health in project development and to prioritize equitable outcomes, particularly for poor and marginalized communities.*

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165 Church Street, New Haven, CT 06510