

RESOLUTION IN FAVOR OF ARLINGTON'S TRANSITION TO RENEWABLE ELECTRICITY BY 2035

[Drafting note: No substantive changes have been made to the *resolved* clauses since the resolution was first introduced at the October 3, 2017 ACCF meeting. *Whereas* clauses and *footnotes* have been updated and revised to reflect Committee input and new information.]

Whereas, Arlington County desires to protect and enhance the quality of life for all residents of Arlington, as well as for their children and grandchildren; and

Whereas, climate change has been widely recognized by government, business, academic and other entities as a local and worldwide threat to our economy, safety, public health and quality of life; and

Whereas, Arlington County is a signatory of the Global Covenant for Mayors for Energy and Climate, committing to track and reduce greenhouse gas emissions and plan for climate adaptation; and

Whereas, Arlington County has adopted a Community Energy Plan as an element of its Comprehensive Plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 75% or more by 2050;¹ and

Whereas, the Arlington Civic Federation has endorsed the goals of the Community Energy Plan²; and

Whereas, Arlington County recently issued a "Climate Action Resolution" re-affirming its commitment to the Community Energy Plan, supporting the principles of the Paris Agreement's global plan to address climate change, and agreeing to act in accordance with the goals of that Agreement; and

Whereas, meeting Arlington's Community Energy Plan goals will require a substantial transition to renewable energy in all sectors of the County; and

Whereas, electricity accounts for approximately two-thirds of energy use in Arlington;³ and

Whereas, renewable electricity⁴ costs in Arlington and nationwide have fallen sharply, and are now competitive in cost with fossil fuel-based electricity for many homeowners, businesses, and County government facilities;⁵ and

Whereas renewable electricity costs are expected to continue to fall for the foreseeable future,⁶ while the cost of fossil fuel-based electricity is expected to rise, making it cost-effective for Arlington to transition to renewable electricity; and

¹ Arlington County Community Energy Plan, <https://environment.arlingtonva.us/energy/community-energy-plan-cep/>.

² Arlington County Civic Federation, Membership Meeting Minutes, May 3, 2011, noting passage of a resolution in support of the Community Energy and Sustainability Task Force Report.

³ Arlington County Community Energy Plan, *supra*, p. 6.

⁴ Renewable electricity is electricity produced from renewable energy sources. Renewable energy sources "capture their energy from existing flows of energy, from on-going natural processes, such as sunshine, wind, flowing water, biological processes, and geothermal heat flows." Science Daily, reference terms, "renewable energy," available online at https://www.sciencedaily.com/terms/renewable_energy.htm.

⁵ Deutsche Bank Securities, Inc., *Solar Grid Parity in a Low Oil Price Era*, February 2015, available online at https://db.com/cr/en/docs/solar_report_full_length.pdf.

⁶ Bloomberg News, "Wind and Solar are Crushing Fossil Fuels," April 6, 2016, available online at <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2016-04-06/wind-and-solar-are-crushing-fossil-fuels>.

Whereas 62 cities and counties have committed to achieve 100% renewable electricity by 2035 or sooner, including large metropolitan areas such as Atlanta, Orlando, Salt Lake City and San Diego, and including 5 cities that already have reached 100% renewable electricity;⁷ and

Whereas, achieving 100% renewable electricity in Arlington by 2035 is feasible through a combination of measures by individuals, businesses and the County government, including taking energy conservation actions identified in the Community Energy Plan, promoting solar installations in Arlington, and purchasing renewable electricity generated outside of Arlington;⁸ and

Whereas, the U.S. Conference of Mayors has determined that “renewable energy represents an enormous economic opportunity for our nation and our nation’s communities to create jobs in an emerging industry, increase economic security, expand prosperity for local residents, reduce air pollution and associated public health risks, reduce strain on water resources, save consumers money and address environmental justice challenges to communities.”⁹

Now, therefore, be it *resolved* that:

1. The Arlington Civic Federation supports the transition to 100% renewable electricity¹⁰ in Arlington by 2035; and
2. Encourages the Arlington County Board to adopt this important goal and to develop appropriate plans and programs to achieve it; and
3. Encourages the Arlington County Board to pursue appropriate state and federal laws and policies supportive of Arlington’s transition to renewable electricity.

⁷ “Is Your City Ready for 100?” A list of cities committed to 100% clean energy. Available online at: <http://www.sierraclub.org/ready-for-100/cities-ready-for-100>.

⁸ “Arlington’s Energy Future,” presentation by Dean Amel, Chair, Mount Vernon Group, Virginia Sierra Club, Arlington Energy Forum, Nov. 16, 2016.

⁹ The United States Conference of Mayors, 85th Annual Meeting, June 23-26, Miami, FL, 2017 Adopted Resolutions, “100% Renewable Energy in American Cities,” available online at: http://legacy.usmayors.org/resolutions/85th_Conference/proposedcommittee.asp?committee=Energy.

¹⁰.100% renewable electricity means Arlington County will generate or purchase renewable electricity in an amount equal to or greater than 100% of usage on an annual basis