

CITY OF NORTHFIELD, MN  
CITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 2021-004

**A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING FEDERAL LEGISLATION AUTHORIZING A  
FEDERAL, REVENUE-NEUTRAL, MARKET-BASED FEE ON CARBON IN FOSSIL  
FUELS.**

WHEREAS, the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and the Department of Natural Resources experts are tracking Minnesota's climate changes, and find Minnesota keeps getting warmer and wetter with more damaging rains and cold weather warming. These destabilizing weather patterns have caused - and will continue to cause - substantial impacts to the health, prosperity, and security of all Northfielders, Minnesotans, but especially children, elderly, pregnant women, low- income families, and racial and ethnic minorities living in poverty; and

WHEREAS, the costs and risks of climate change to our economy, infrastructure, public safety, and health are real, they are growing, and they are burdening businesses, taxpayers, and municipal budgets; and

WHEREAS, in and around the City of Northfield heavier rainstorms and more frequent and severe flooding are occurring as shown by FEMA flood claims in neighboring Bridgewater Township in 1998, 2000, 2010, 2012, and 2014, which impact the area's built environment putting stresses on the public health and economy; and

WHEREAS, presently the environmental, health, and social costs of climate change caused by carbon emissions are not included in the price of fossil fuels, but rather these externalized costs are borne by all Northfielders, Minnesotans, and all the world's citizens; and

WHEREAS, the City of Northfield has acknowledged the effects of climate change and is taking specific action through its continuing participation in Minnesota's Green Step Cities Step 4 and its implementation of the Climate Action Plan (CAP) that was accepted on November 5, 2019. The CAP states specifically that we should

*“Engage decision-makers, including local members of boards and commissions, county officials, as well as state and national representatives around elements of the climate action plan”,*

and one of the elements of the plan is to *“plan for the elimination of fossil fuels in the community...”*; and

WHEREAS, it will be more feasible to reduce and eliminate fossil fuels in the community when practices that do not use fossil fuels are incentivized while also protecting lower and middle-income households; and

WHEREAS, economists overwhelmingly support, including over 3500 U.S. economists, all four former chairs of the Federal Reserve, 27 Nobel laureate economists, and 15 former chairs of the Council of Economic Advisers state that “a carbon tax offers the most cost-effective lever to reduce carbon emissions at the scale and speed that is necessary;” and

WHEREAS, there is increasing support for carbon pricing from prominent Republicans and the business community, as shown by the actions of groups such as the Climate Leadership Council and the Business Roundtable; and

WHEREAS, there is increasing bipartisan support in Congress for economically viable climate solutions, as evidenced by the bipartisan House of Representatives’ Climate Solutions Caucus, the bipartisan Senate Climate Solutions Caucus, and bipartisan carbon pricing bills introduced in both the House and Senate that call for the implementation of a Federal, market-based fee on carbon in fossil fuels; and

WHEREAS, the City will more successfully achieve its climate action goals with the support of a Federal revenue-neutral market-based fee on carbon in fossil fuels that will:

1. Send a clear price signal to entrepreneurs and existing businesses to invest in a clean energy economy by placing a fee on fossil fuels at the source (the well, mine, or port of entry).
2. Protect lower and middle-income households, as all revenues collected will be returned to American households as a monthly dividend.
3. Create jobs and economic growth, as the dividend puts money back into local economies.
4. Reduce pollution which will improve the health and productivity of citizens.
5. Discourage domestic businesses through a border adjustment from relocating where they can emit more CO<sub>2</sub>, and thereby encourage other nations to adopt an equivalent price on carbon.
6. Make the United States a leader in mitigating climate change and clean energy technologies, encouraging other nations to do the same without the need for complex international agreements; and

WHEREAS, the delegations representing Northfield in both houses of the United States Congress, the State Legislators representing Northfield, and the Minnesota Governor will receive a copy of this Resolution following its passage by the City Council.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL THAT:

1. The City Council do hereby call upon the United States Congress to pass legislation, and the President of the United States to sign into law, a Federal, revenue-neutral, market-based fee on the carbon in fossil fuels that will significantly reduce carbon emissions and will return the entire fee minus administrative costs to all households, in order to protect the economy and climate for us and for future generations.
2. Further, the City Council encourages that such legislation include clear processes and objectives, and that the implementation of such legislation should minimize financial impacts to our most vulnerable citizens, including the economically disadvantaged.
3. The City Council encourages other communities to join them in this request for the United States to recognize and address the global problems of carbon emissions in this manner.

PASSED by the City Council of the City of Northfield on this 19th day of January, 2021.

ATTEST

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City Clerk

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Mayor

VOTE:   \_\_\_ POWNELL   \_\_\_ GRABAU   \_\_\_ NAKASIAN   \_\_\_ NESS  
          \_\_\_ PETERSON WHITE   \_\_\_ REISTER   \_\_\_ ZUCCOLOTTO