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SJR-2 Climate change: Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty. (2023-2024)

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Senate Joint Resolution No. 2

CHAPTER 153

Relative to climate change and fossil fuels.

[Filed with Secretary of State September 08, 2023.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SJR 2, Gonzalez. Climate change: Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty.

This measure would, among other things, formally endorse the call for a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty, state California's agreement with the principle of the nonproliferation of fossil fuels, and urge the United States government to join in formally developing a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Fiscal Committee: no

WHEREAS, The scientific consensus is clear that human activities are primarily responsible for accelerating global climate change, and that the climate crisis now represents one of the preeminent threats to global civilization; and

WHEREAS, Fossil fuels are the largest contributor to global climate change, accounting for 75 percent of greenhouse gas emissions; and

WHEREAS, The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Sixth Assessment Report Synthesis Report, approved by 195 member states in March 2023, notes that greatly reduced fossil fuel use would be fundamental to limiting warming and warned that existing fossil fuel infrastructure was already sufficient to breach the 1.5 degrees Celsius limit; and

WHEREAS, In 2021, the United Nations Human Rights Council adopted landmark legislation, Resolution 48/13, recognizing a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment is a human right; and

WHEREAS, The Paris Agreement makes no mention of coal, oil, and gas, an omission with respect to the supply and production of fossil fuels, the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions, that needs to be collectively addressed by other means; and

WHEREAS, The Glasgow Climate Pact improved only incrementally in calling for a phasedown of unabated coal, not a phaseout of all fossil fuels; and

WHEREAS, Changes in California's climate are already being felt with extreme wildfires, heat waves, droughts, and increasingly severe storms, as well as rising sea levels, coastal inundation, and ocean warming; and

WHEREAS, Our entire community is impacted by the health and safety risks of fossil fuel expansion, particularly those who also face socioeconomic and health inequities, including low-income families, those experiencing homelessness, people of color and

Indigenous peoples, youth, seniors, those experiencing mental health challenges and physical disabilities, and people with health conditions; and

WHEREAS, Youth and future generations have the most to lose from a lack of immediate action to stop fossil fuel expansion as they face major and lifelong health, ecological, social, and economic impacts from climate change, including food and water shortages, infectious diseases, and natural disasters; and

WHEREAS, The International Monetary Fund found that the fossil fuel industry was globally subsidized by \$11,000,000 per minute in 2020, siphoning away funding needed by cities, communities, and other industries; and

WHEREAS, According to the United Nations Environment Programme Production Gap Report, governments and the fossil fuel industry are currently planning to produce about 110 percent more fossil fuels by 2030 than what is needed to limit warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius and avert catastrophic climate disruption; and

WHEREAS, The International Institute for Sustainable Development has found a “large consensus” across all published studies that developing new oil and gas fields is “incompatible” with the 1.5 degrees Celsius target, including the International Energy Agency that found that there are “no new oil and gas fields approved for development in our [1.5 degrees Celsius] pathway”; and

WHEREAS, A clean energy transition presents greater economic opportunities than continued dependence on fossil fuel use and extraction; and

WHEREAS, Our community is committed, as part of our climate emergency response, to a just energy transition and to ambitious investments in green infrastructure and workforce training, and industries that will create high-paying and skilled union jobs and rapidly decarbonize our economy; and

WHEREAS, California recognizes that it is the urgent responsibility and moral obligation of wealthy fossil fuel producers to manage the decline and phaseout of existing production; and

WHEREAS, A global initiative is underway calling for a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty that would provide a global mechanism to end new fossil fuel exploration and expansion, manage a phaseout of existing production in line with the global commitment to limit warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius, and accelerate equitable transition plans; and

WHEREAS, The Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty has been formally called for by Vanuatu at the United Nations General Assembly and by Tuvalu at the Sharm el-Sheikh Climate Change Conference (COP 27) in addition to public endorsements from the World Health Organization, the European Parliament, the Vatican, and over 70 cities and subnational governments globally, including the California Cities of Los Angeles, Hayward, Richmond, Santa Ana, and Sebastopol, as well as the Hawaii State Legislature; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate and the Assembly of the State of California, jointly, That the Legislature formally endorses the call for a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty; and be it further

Resolved, That the Legislature urges the United States government to join the global community in formally developing a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty as an international mechanism to manage a global transition away from coal, oil, and gas; and be it further

Resolved, That California agrees with the principle of the nonproliferation of fossil fuels and the need to end the expansion of new coal, oil, and gas production; and be it further

Resolved, That California affirms the need for a plan to phase out existing fossil fuel production that prioritizes the most impacted workers and local government services with short- and long-term investments that include enforceable labor standards, such as prevailing wages, apprenticeship opportunities, and project labor agreements, to protect workers and communities; and be it further

Resolved, That the Legislature affirms its ongoing commitment to the goals of the Paris Agreement, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, and the greenhouse gas reduction targets as called for by the IPCC, and intends to meet its proportionate greenhouse gas reductions under the Paris Agreement; and be it further

Resolved, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of this resolution to the President and Vice President of the United States, to the Speaker and Minority Leader of the House of Representatives, to the Majority and Minority Leaders of the Senate, to each Senator and Representative from California in the Congress of the United States, to the Governor, to the mayor of each city in California, to the United Nations Secretary-General, and to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.