Senate

of the

Student Government Association

of

The Johns Hopkins University

{ *S. Resolution 17-18, 00* }

A Resolution Calling for Fossil Fuel Divestment and Renewable Energy Investment

Introduced By: Senator **AJ Tsang** and considered this **21st** day of **February** in the Year **2017**

Sponsored By: Senator **Adelaide Morphett** of the **Senior** Class

Senator **Ash Panakam** of the **Sophomore** Class

Referred to the senate by the **COMMITTEE ON SUSTAINABILITY AND FACILITIES** which recommends its **PASSAGE/FAILURE** by a vote of **6** to **0**.

Whereas Johns Hopkins University currently invests in an undisclosed amount of fossil fuel companies; and

Whereas Johns Hopkins University investments are managed by the Board of Trustees and advised upon by the Provost's Public Interest Investment Advisory Committee (PIIAC), the latter of which welcomes recommendations and proposal submissions; and

Whereas the Johns Hopkins student group "Refuel Our Future" submitted a formal proposal for the University to divest from fossil fuels in December 2015; and

Whereas the National Research Council has affirmed that fossil fuel production results in a loss of biodiversity, chemical degradation, and long-term harm to biological organisms, including humans; and

Whereas fossil fuel production has been further shown to detract from human health through afflictions such as, but not limited to:

- Cancers and melanomas,
- Chronic cardiovascular diseases,
- Kidney, liver, and other organ failures,
- Premature births and high-risk pregnancies (this particular outcome has been proven by the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health); and

Whereas climate change caused by fossil fuel production may precipitate dangerous repercussions for the people of Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, and Maryland, including but not limited to:

- Rising sea levels in the Chesapeake Bay that are expected to rise by up to two feet in the next three decades, and possibly five by the end of twenty-first century;
- A 900% increase in flood volume in Baltimore and Annapolis since 1960;
- An increase in the number of respiratory illnesses; and

Whereas many universities have, in light of this evidence, already divested from fossil fuels and have begun to invest renewable energy companies, including but not limited to:

- Stanford University,
- Georgetown University,
- The University of California,
- Syracuse University; and

Whereas Johns Hopkins University has demonstrated that it can successfully divest from harmful industries when it wishes, as exemplified by its divestment from the tobacco industry in 1993; and

Whereas there are sixteen Johns Hopkins University programs, institutes, or departments committed to resolving the issues of environmental degradation and climate

change, a clear indication that Johns Hopkins community recognizes the importance of environmental protection; and

Whereas the Johns Hopkins University student body affirmed its support for fossil fuel divestment in a 2014 referendum where 73% of all 397 respondents agreed that the University should divest its endowment from the top 200 fossil fuel companies; and

Whereas the Johns Hopkins University has indicated an initial willingness to divest by signing the American Campuses Act on Climate Pledge in November 2015, along with 317 other universities, aligning itself with a vow to:

a. Accelerate the transition to low-carbon energy, and
b. Embed sustainability practices and principles into the culture of Johns Hopkins University; and

Whereas there are another 400 philanthropic organizations and 2,000 individuals, together comprising almost $3 trillion in assets, that have promised to divest from fossil fuels; and

Whereas a transition to investment in renewable energy could result in a 6% improvement in return over environmentally unfriendly investments, as evidenced by a 2005 report from the Financial Analysts Journal; and

Whereas the preceding evidence, and all evidence included in the Refuel Our Future divestment proposal, indicate a clear and pressing need for action to be taken, including Johns Hopkins University divestment from fossil fuels; and

Therefore, Be It Resolved that the Johns Hopkins Student Government Association encourages the Johns Hopkins Board of Trustees and the Public Interest Investment Advisory Committee to:

A. Carry out the recommendations contained within the divestment proposal from Refuel Our Future, especially the recommendation for divestment from all direct investments currently held in any company listed in the Carbon Underground 200;
B. Consult with environmental studies-related departments, programs, and institutes across the University to begin investment in renewable energy companies; and
C. Follow through on its plan to hold a public forum on the issue of fossil fuel divestment, as mentioned in its December meeting minutes.

Be It Further Resolved that a copy of this resolution be transmitted to the JHU Board of Trustees, the Public Interest Investment Advisory Committee, University President Ron Daniels and University Provost Sunil Kumar.

THE RESOLUTION HEREBY **PASSES/FAILS** BY A VOTE OF **17** TO **4** WITH **0** ABSTENTIONS.

Upon adoption, we have hereunto set our hands and caused the seal of the Senate to be affixed to this resolution indicating the senate's assent and thus officially designating the resolution's adoption as the position and is will of the Senate and the Student Body of The Johns Hopkins University..

Signatures of Enactment:

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AJ Tsang
President of the Senate
Executive Vice President of the Johns Hopkins SGA

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Noh Mebrahtu
Executive President of the Johns Hopkins SGA

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Rushabh Doshi
Executive Secretary of the Johns Hopkins SGA

_____

Mi Tu
Executive Treasurer of the Johns Hopkins SGA

Signatures of Ceremony:

_____

Introducer Name(s) Here
Introducer Position(s) Here

Co-Sponsor Name(s) Here
Co-Sponsor Position(s) Here

Sources

Refuel Our Future JHU. *PIIAC Proposal: Arguing for Fossil Fuel Divestment*. Divestment Proposal. Baltimore, Maryland: Refuel Our Future JHU, 2016. Print.

Public Interest Investment Advisory Committee. Office of the Provost. *Johns Hopkins University Office of the Provost*. Johns Hopkins University, 2 Dec. 2016. Web. 31 Jan. 2017.

Public Interest Investment Advisory Committee. Office of the Provost. *Johns Hopkins University Office of the Provost*. Johns Hopkins University, 6 Dec. 2016. Web. 31 Jan. 2017.

"American Campuses Act on Climate." *Obama White House*. National Archives and Records Administration, 20 Jan. 2017. Web. 13 Feb. 2017.