

1 **RESOLUTION 1920-AU-004**

2 **A RESOLUTION REQUESTING ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND TRANSPARENCY REGARDING THE**  
3 **RECENT HIRING OF MR. CLINTON WOODS BY THE COLLEGE OF FOOD, AGRICULTURAL, AND**  
4 **ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES**

5  
6 Authors: Carlyn LaRosa (.15) – Sustainability and Environmental Responsibility Chair, Robert Dahlberg-Sears (.1),  
7 Utkarsh Shah (.1285)

8  
9 Sponsors: Executive Committee

10 WHEREAS the founding goal of The Ohio State University (originally instantiated as Ohio Agricultural and Mechanical  
11 College) has been understanding, gaining benefit from, respecting, and protecting the environment<sup>1</sup>; and

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13 WHEREAS the stated vision of the university is “The Ohio State University is the model 21st-century public, land grant,  
14 research, urban, community engaged institution”<sup>2</sup>; and

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16 WHEREAS The Ohio State University has demonstrated a strong commitment to both public health and sustainability<sup>3</sup>;  
17 and

18  
19 WHEREAS with generous funding from Nationwide Insurance’s foundation, the College of Food, Agriculture, and  
20 Environmental Sciences (CFAES) created a new position of Director of Strategic Partnership, which requires extensive  
21 collaboration between researchers at The Ohio State University and external partners; and

22  
23 WHEREAS the university recently hired Mr. Clinton Woods, a former deputy assistant administrator for the Office of Air  
24 and Radiation in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), to fulfill this role of Director of Strategic  
25 Partnerships, effective October 14, 2019; and

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27 WHEREAS Mr. Woods, in his previous roles, has directly advocated against the stated values of this university, the  
28 interests of our community, and the current scientific consensus regarding issues of sustainability, environmental  
29 stewardship, and public health; and

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31 WHEREAS in his role at the EPA, Mr. Woods was directly involved in loosening regulations designed to reduce  
32 greenhouse gas emissions, which by the EPA’s own estimates increased premature deaths by 1,400 and new cases of  
33 asthma by 48,000 each year<sup>4</sup>; and

34  
35 WHEREAS during his tenure at the EPA, Mr. Woods made suggestions regarding how the agency should assess toxic  
36 chemicals and radiation based upon information from a controversial toxicologist best known for asserting pollution and  
37 radiation is beneficial for humans<sup>5</sup>; and

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39 WHEREAS air pollution is a serious public health issue in Columbus<sup>6</sup>, and particularly for low-income and African  
40 American communities, which was shown by CFAES faculty<sup>7</sup>; and

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<sup>1</sup> Facilities Operations and Development, “The Ohio State University Climate Action Plan”

[https://fod.osu.edu/sites/default/files/ohio\\_state\\_climate\\_action\\_plan.pdf](https://fod.osu.edu/sites/default/files/ohio_state_climate_action_plan.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Office of Academic Affairs, “Mission, Vision, Values and Goals” <https://oaa.osu.edu/mission-vision-values-and-core-goals>

<sup>3</sup> “Ohio State Sustainability Goals” <https://www.osu.edu/assets/pdf/sustainability/sustainabilitygoals.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> The Columbus Dispatch, “Editorial: Ohio State should not embrace new hire’s policy past at EPA”

<https://www.dispatch.com/opinion/20191018/editorial-ohio-state-should-not-embrace-new-hires-policy-past-at-epa>

<sup>5</sup> Los Angeles Times, “Scientist says some pollution is good for you — a disputed claim Trump’s EPA has embraced “

<https://www.latimes.com/local/california/la-me-secret-science-20190219-story.html>

<sup>6</sup> The Columbus Dispatch, “Air quality still poor in Columbus; EPA gives metro area 3 years to meet standards”

<https://www.dispatch.com/news/20180805/air-quality-still-poor-in-columbus-epa-gives-metro-area-3-years-to-meet-standards>

<sup>7</sup> College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences, “Low-income, black neighborhoods still hit hard by air pollution”

<https://cfaes.osu.edu/news/articles/low-income-black-neighborhoods-still-hit-hard-by-air-pollution>

43 WHEREAS Mr. Woods was previously employed by the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC), a group that  
44 lobbies on behalf of corporate interests, often at the expense of the environment. Mr. Woods served as the Director of the  
45 Energy, Environment and Agriculture Task Force during his time at ALEC<sup>8</sup>; and  
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47 WHEREAS while external partnerships can be of great mutual benefit to both parties, such partnerships must not  
48 compromise the independence of the research conducted at Ohio State; and  
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50 WHEREAS Mr. Woods has previously demonstrated a willingness to overlook scientific consensus in favor of advocating  
51 for corporate interests, which have had tangible effects in terms of public and environmental health; and  
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53 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that in accordance with the university's stated values of integrity, transparency, and  
54 trust<sup>2</sup>, the Council of Graduate Students requests from Dean Cathann Kress a more detailed explanation of the role of the  
55 Director of Strategic Partnerships, and why the position was newly created; and  
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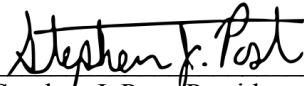
57 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, we ask that Dean Kress explain why Mr. Woods was hired, and what qualities of Mr.  
58 Woods set him apart from the approximately 30 other applicants<sup>9</sup>; and  
59

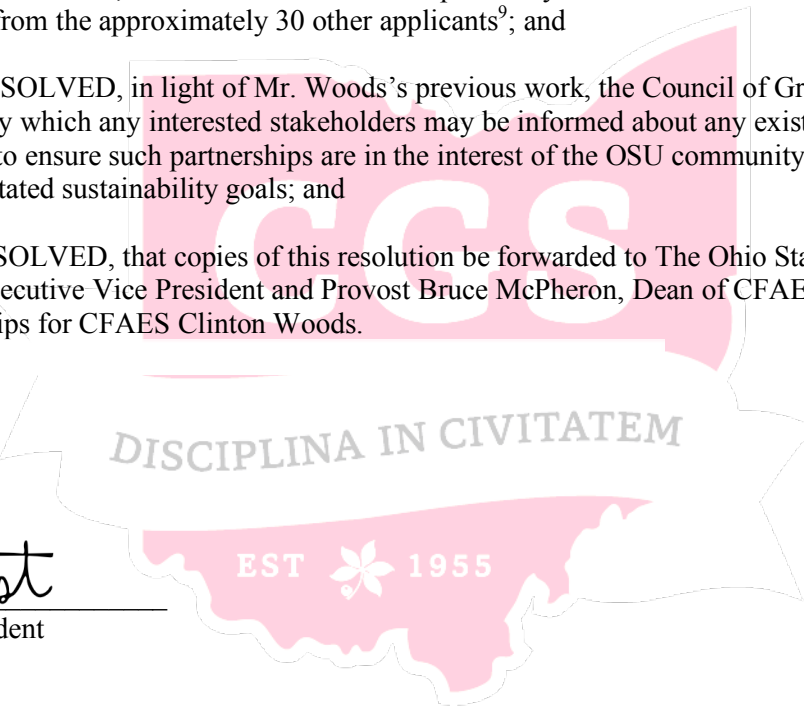
60 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, in light of Mr. Woods's previous work, the Council of Graduate Students requests a  
61 detailed mechanism by which any interested stakeholders may be informed about any existing, pending, or intended  
62 external partnerships to ensure such partnerships are in the interest of the OSU community and resources, and coincide  
63 with the university's stated sustainability goals; and  
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65 BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be forwarded to The Ohio State University President  
66 Michael V. Drake, Executive Vice President and Provost Bruce McPheron, Dean of CFAES Cathann Kress, and Director  
67 of Strategic Partnerships for CFAES Clinton Woods.  
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70 Approved:  Yes/ No

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72 Date: 11/8/19

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75 \_\_\_\_\_  
76 Stephen J. Post, President



Council of Graduate Students  
at The Ohio State University

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<sup>8</sup> The Columbus Dispatch, "Editorial: Ohio State should not embrace new hire's policy past at EPA"  
<https://www.dispatch.com/opinion/20191018/editorial-ohio-state-should-not-embrace-new-hires-policy-past-at-epa>

<sup>9</sup> The Columbus Dispatch, "Former EPA official connected to loosening air pollution regs hired for new Ohio State post"  
<https://www.dispatch.com/news/20191012/former-epa-official-connected-to-loosening-air-pollution-regs-hired-for-new-ohio-state-post>