

1 **RESOLUTION 2021-007**

2 A RESOLUTION ADVOCATING FOR UNIVERSITY SUPPORT FOR COMMUNITIES NEGATIVELY  
3 IMPACTED BY THE COMBINED HEAT AND POWER FACILITY

4 Authors: Mary Sagatellova,<sup>2</sup>, Delegate, Evolution, Ecology, and Organic Biology; Wanderson Novais Peireira,<sup>1</sup>, Chair,  
5 Sustainability and Environmental Responsibility Committee

6 Sponsor: Executive Committee

7  
8 WHEREAS the Council of Graduate Students (CGS) is the representative body of all graduate students enrolled at The  
9 Ohio State University as established by Article 2, Section 1 of the CGS Constitution; and

10  
11 WHEREAS the Council or its appointed representative(s) have the power to sit as an advisory agent on behalf of graduate  
12 students on all matters brought before personnel, committees, or agencies of The Ohio State University involving the interest  
13 of graduate students as established in Article 3 Section 3 of the CGS Constitution; and

14  
15 WHEREAS the Sustainability and Environmental Responsibility Committee (SERC) advocates for sustainability and  
16 environmentally friendly policies and procedures within CGS and across The Ohio State University; and

17  
18 WHEREAS the Ohio Power Siting Board issued an Opinion, Order, and Certificate approving the Ohio State University's  
19 Combined Heat and Power Facility on September 17<sup>th</sup> 1,2; and

20  
21 WHEREAS the Combined Heat and Power Facility will produce thermal energy powered by natural gas which will  
22 require natural gas extraction via hydraulic fracturing, also known as fracking<sup>3</sup>; and

23  
24 WHEREAS extracting natural gas via fracking has been shown to contaminate drinking water<sup>4</sup>, displace communities<sup>5</sup>,  
25 negatively impact ecological systems<sup>6</sup>, and emit high amounts of methane into the atmosphere<sup>7</sup>; and

26  
27 WHEREAS methane is the second most prevalent greenhouse gas within the atmosphere and is more efficient than carbon  
28 dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) at trapping solar radiation and contributing to global climate change; and

29  
30 WHEREAS Ohio State did not properly investigate the adverse environmental, economic, or social consequences of natural  
31 gas extraction for the Combined Heat and Power Facility<sup>8</sup>; and

32  
33 WHEREAS students have opposed the Combined Heat and Power plant due to potential harm for people and  
34 environment<sup>9,10</sup>; and

35  
36 WHEREAS Ohio State has not, as of yet, identified the source of natural gas for the Combined Heat and Power Plant but  
37 acknowledged it will be incrementally derived from shale deposits<sup>11</sup>; and

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.dispatch.com/story/business/energy-resource/2020/09/19/planned-ohio-state-power-plant-gets-regulatory-approval/114084942/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://buildingthefuture.osu.edu/combined-heat-and-power-plant>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.thelancet.com/2020/09/ohio-state-gains-approval-for-on-campus-natural-gas-plant/>

<sup>4</sup> Osborn, S.G., Vengosh, A., Warner, N.R., Jackson, R.B. (2011). Methane contamination of drinking water accompanying gas-well drilling and hydraulic fracturing. *Proc Natl Acad Sci. U.S.A.* 108: 8172.

<sup>5</sup> Jacquet, J.B. (2014). Review of risks to communities from shale energy development. *Environ Sci Technol.*, 48: 8321-8333.

<sup>6</sup> Drohan, P.J., Brittingham, M., Bishop, J., et al. (2012). Early trends in landcover change and forest fragmentation due to shale-gas development in Pennsylvania: a potential out-come for the Northcentral Appalachians. *Environ Manag.* 49:1061.

<sup>7</sup> Meng, Q. (2017). The impacts of fracking on the environment: A total environmental study paradigm. *Science of the Total Environment*, 580: 953-957.

<sup>8</sup> Tufekci Cross-Exam at 17:17-20, 144:19-145:12; see Potter Cross-Exam at 197:2-19.

<sup>9</sup> [https://usg.osu.edu/posts/documents/doc\\_1092020\\_164953936.pdf](https://usg.osu.edu/posts/documents/doc_1092020_164953936.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> Letter from Grad Roots to the Ohio Power Sitting Board and Public Utilities Commission.

<https://www.google.com/url?q=https://docs.google.com/document/d/11ZG3WPI4YIGjJOBCjodmF1bkVxqiBXYLpqvWSs1QNn0/edit?ts%3D5f284b57&sa=D&ust=1603243368094000&usg=AOvVaw3P4vTt24OALboiny9XadEH>

<sup>11</sup> Tufekci Cross-Exam at 144:14-18; 146:23-147:9; Potter Cross-Exam at 196:15-21, 197:2-5.

39 WHEREAS The Ohio State University expressed the motivation for the construction of the Combined Heat and Power Plant  
40 was to increase energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions, as well as for economic reasons<sup>12</sup>; and  
41  
42 WHEREAS Ohio State representatives have privately disclosed that the plant will save the University approximately 10  
43 million dollars per year in heat and power expenses<sup>13</sup>; and  
44  
45 WHEREAS disenfranchised communities have historically been disproportionately affected by fossil fuel extraction and  
46 climate change<sup>14</sup>; and  
47  
48 WHEREAS affected communities are largely composed of those with lower income, higher economic stress, lower  
49 education levels, and are often identified as communities of color<sup>15</sup>; and  
50  
51 WHEREAS poverty levels have been correlated with active fracking wells, which in turn, affects reliable information access  
52 and mobility of individuals within those communities<sup>16</sup>; and  
53  
54 WHEREAS Ohio State's Combined Heat and Power Plant will be directly contributing to further disenfranchisement of  
55 vulnerable communities through natural gas extraction; and  
56  
57 WHEREAS the impacts of the Ohio State's Combined Heat and Power Plant are in direct conflict with the university's  
58 sustainability goal of engagement that support long-term economic, social, and environmental welfare of the campus,  
59 surrounding neighborhoods, and global community<sup>17</sup>.  
60  
61 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED the Council of Graduate Students recommends for Ohio State to actively work to  
62 mitigate inequities within communities affected by natural gas extracted for the Combined Heat and Power Plant; and  
63  
64 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Ohio State allocates a substantial portion of funding to affected communities; and  
65  
66 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Ohio State support a robust assessment of the impact the Combined Heat and Power  
67 Plant on both the Columbus community and communities from which natural gas for the plant is extracted from; and  
68  
69 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a third party external to Ohio State be utilized for this assessment in order to mitigate  
70 bias and conflicts of interest; and  
71  
72 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Ohio State should follow the example of existing initiatives to understand how social  
73 and economic conditions combine with fossil fuel induced pollution to contribute to inequitable environmental and health  
74 related outcomes, such as the Washington Environmental Health Disparities Map Project<sup>18</sup>, in order to fully understand the  
75 plant's impact; and  
76  
77 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Ohio State should emulate existing policies aimed at mitigating inequities from fossil  
78 fuel extraction such as the California Senate Bill 535, which directs funding to disadvantaged communities<sup>19</sup>; and  
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<sup>12</sup> [https://si.osu.edu/sites/default/files/Energy%20Use\\_CHP%20FAQ%20092320.pdf](https://si.osu.edu/sites/default/files/Energy%20Use_CHP%20FAQ%20092320.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> Information disclosed during a webinar hosted by the Sustainability Institute to inform students about the CHP plant.

<sup>14</sup> Bienkowski, B. (2015). Poor Communities Bear Greatest Burden from Fracking. Retrieved from <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/poor-communities-bear-greatest-burden-from-fracking/>

<sup>15</sup> [https://www.foodandwaterwatch.org/sites/default/files/rpt\\_1806\\_pagasplants\\_web3.pdf](https://www.foodandwaterwatch.org/sites/default/files/rpt_1806_pagasplants_web3.pdf)

<sup>16</sup> Ogneva-Himmelberger, Y., & Huang, L. (2015). Spatial distribution of unconventional gas wells and human populations in the Marcellus Shale in the United States: Vulnerability Analysis. *Applied Geography*, 60:165-174.

<sup>17</sup> <https://ohiostatebuckeyes.com/sustainability/goals/>

<sup>18</sup> <https://deohs.washington.edu/washington-environmental-health-disparities-map-project>

<sup>19</sup> <https://oehha.ca.gov/calenviroscreen/sb535>

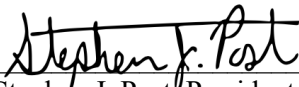
80 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Ohio State should leverage the experience of President Kristina Johnson, as Under  
81 Secretary of Energy at the U.S. Department of Energy, who led the creation of the Strategic Technology Energy plan to  
82 reduce national carbon emissions and achieve 80% clean energy electricity<sup>20,21</sup>; and  
83

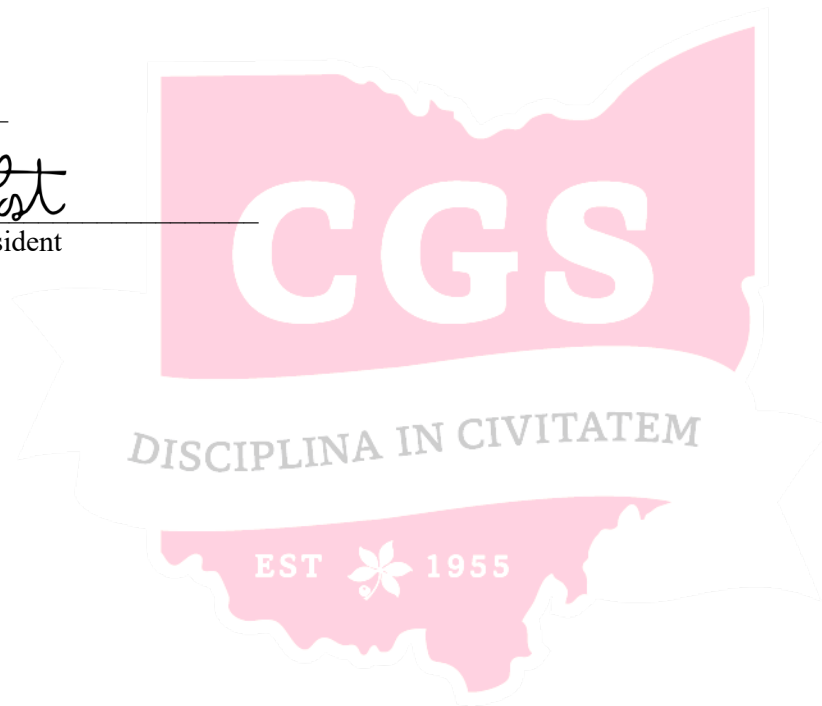
84 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Ohio State additionally leverage the knowledge of its researchers as experts in fields  
85 of sustainability, environmental justice, and climate research to mitigate the negative effects of the Combined Heat and  
86 Power Plant and lead on climate action as an institution; and  
87

88 BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the Council of Graduate Students directs its President and Vice President to distribute  
89 this resolution to The Ohio State University President Kristina M. Johnson, Executive Vice President and Provost Bruce  
90 McPherson, Vice Provost for Graduate Studies and Dean of the Graduate School Alicia Bertone, Vice President for  
91 Student Life Melissa Shivers, Vice President for Government Affairs Stacy Rastaukas, and the Chair of the Council on  
92 Student Affairs Jordan Vадja, and all other relevant leadership and authorities of The Ohio State University and its  
93 partners.  
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95 Approved: Yes/No

96  
97 Date: \_\_11/6/20\_\_  
98

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100  
101 Stephen J. Post, President  
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Council of Graduate Students  
at The Ohio State University

<sup>20</sup> <https://energy.stanford.edu/events/distinguished-lecture-kristina-johnson>

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.energy.gov/diversity/contributors/dr-kristina-m-johnson>