RESOLUTION 2021-008

A RESOLUTION AGAINST FUTURE USE OF FOSSIL FUELS

Authors: Sarah Haines.241, Delegate, Environmental Science; Wanderson Novais Pereira.1, Chair, Sustainability and Environmental Responsibility

Sponsor: Executive Committee

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

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

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

WHEREAS The Ohio State University students are asking the university to divest from fossil fuel projects and invest in clean renewable energy alternatives1,2; and

WHEREAS The Undergraduate Student Government has already recommended The Ohio State to reconsider the use of fossil fuels, reduce carbon emissions, and stay accountable to its sustainability goals3; and

WHEREAS The Ohio State’s sustainability goals4 to “increase Ohio State’s national/international reputation as a sustainability research leader” and “support the long-term economic, social and environmental welfare of the campus, surrounding neighborhoods and the global community” should set an example for innovation through the use of clean renewable energy, sustainable community development, and ecosystem protection and preservation; and

WHEREAS The Ohio State University’s Climate Action Plan per the Presidents’ Climate Leadership Commitment is committed to carbon neutrality by 20505; and

WHEREAS graduate students have been against the implementation of the Combined Heat and Power Plant (CHP) due to its reliance on hydraulic fracturing, also known as fracking, to obtain natural gas6; and

WHEREAS other universities in the United States, including in Ohio, have partially or completely divested from fossil fuels7,8,9; and

WHEREAS we are facing a global climate emergency10 in which fossil fuels contribute to a loss of biodiversity11 through degradation and disturbance of habitats12; and

5 https://si.osu.edu/sites/default/files/CAP_Final_04082020.pdf
10 https://www.unenvironment.org/explore-topics/climate-change/facts-about-climate-emergency
11 https://artsandsciences.osu.edu/news/climate-change-ohio
WHEREAS the extraction and use of fossil fuels has caused harm to communities and ecosystems in the United States\textsuperscript{13,14}; and

WHEREAS there is an immediate need to decarbonize our economy and activities, including industries, transportation, and energy\textsuperscript{15}; and

WHEREAS 93\% of United States anthropogenic carbon dioxide (CO\textsubscript{2}) emission are due to fossil fuel combustion\textsuperscript{16}; and

WHEREAS the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change states that to limit planet warming by 1.5°C (2.7°F), CO\textsubscript{2} emissions must reach ‘net zero’ by 2050.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that CGS is in opposition to the prolonged reliance on power plants utilizing fossil fuels, due to some of the environmental and social implications of the Combined Heat and Power Plants; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that for future projects, SERC urges The Ohio State University to consider investing in the use of clean renewable energy and completely divest from the use of fossil fuels; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED as The Ohio State is forming leaders and citizens that will contribute to the future of the world, SERC urges the university to allow for student input and consideration for future projects, particularly in projects that have the potential to harm communities, the environment, and compromise the future of the planet; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that as The Ohio State University is committed to addressing sustainability challenges in our community and beyond, future projects should consider environmental impacts that may negatively affect not only Ohio residents but all other communities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that The Ohio State University must commit to protecting the lives of black, indigenous, and all people of color POC students as well as low income and rural communities locally and globally that are disproportionately impacted by fossil fuels and hydraulic fracking; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that as a non-profit organization and as an institution that should invest in research and innovation to further improve public health, The Ohio State University should stay true to its mission and sustainability goals and consider all potential impacts of future projects, not only profits; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the Council of Graduate Students directs its President and Vice President to distribute this resolution to The Ohio State University President Kristina M. Johnson, Executive Vice President and Provost Bruce McPherson, Vice President of Administration and Planning Jay Kasey, Vice President for Student Life Melissa Shivers, Vice President for Government Affairs Stacy Rastaukas, and the Chair of the Council on Student Affairs Jordan Vadja, and all other relevant leadership and authorities of The Ohio State University and its partners.

Approved: Yes/No

Date: __11/6/20__

__________________________________

Stephen J. Post, President