

ATTACHMENT #1

RESOLUTION # XX-XX

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF RICHMOND CALIFORNIA IN SUPPORT OF THE POLLUTERS PAY CLIMATE SUPERFUND ACT OF 2025

WHEREAS, climate change, resulting primarily from the combustion of fossil fuels, is an immediate, grave threat to the people, communities, biodiversity, environment, and economy of the state; and

WHEREAS, California communities are under siege by escalating fires, floods, droughts, and other disasters. From 1980–2024, 46 extreme weather and climate disaster events¹ impacted California, with losses exceeding \$1 billion each; and

WHEREAS, in January 2025, the nation watched in horror as fatal firestorms raged across Los Angeles and Ventura Counties, killing 30 beloved community members, destroying entire communities and forcing tens of thousands of residents to evacuate. Over 12,000 homes, businesses and institutions burned in apocalyptic fires. The devastation is estimated to cost Californians a staggering \$250 billion; and

WHEREAS, across the state, local governments and taxpayers are bearing the immense, mounting costs of rebuilding from climate damages, increased insurance premiums, property taxes, and utility bills. State and local budgets are stretched to the brink as climate risks rise, jeopardizing public services, and forcing communities to carry the burden to address climate-related emergencies; and

WHEREAS, oil and gas wells in California are disproportionately located in Black, Latine, and low-income communities,² causing disproportionate rates of cancer, asthma, cardiovascular disease, birth defects, and other chronic conditions; and³

WHEREAS, the fiscal impact of environmental destruction in California will cost at least \$113 billion annually without intervention;⁴ and

WHEREAS, the City of Richmond adopted a Climate Action Plan in 2016, recognizing that increased greenhouse gas emissions lead to threats to coastal infrastructure due to “sea level rise, public health problems arising from more extremely hot days and poorer air quality; longer and more intense wildfire conditions; more frequent droughts with possible disruptions in fresh water supplies; and vastly different natural resource conditions”⁵; and

WHEREAS, the City of Richmond declared a climate emergency in 2018 in response to climate change,⁶ and has a responsibility to support the transition away from fossil fuels; and

WHEREAS, existing law states that it is California policy to achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions no later than 2045;⁷ and

¹ [https://www.ncei.noaa.gov/access/billions/state-summary/CA#:~:text=From%201980%E2%80%932024%2C%20there%20were,events%20\(CPI%2Dadjusted\)](https://www.ncei.noaa.gov/access/billions/state-summary/CA#:~:text=From%201980%E2%80%932024%2C%20there%20were,events%20(CPI%2Dadjusted)).

² <https://agupubs.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1029/2022GH000690>

³ <https://insideclimatenews.org/news/29082022/oil-well-health-california/>

⁴ https://www.energy.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2019-11/Statewide_Reports-SUM-CCCA4-2018-013_Statewide_Summary_Report_ADA.pdf

⁵ <https://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/DocumentCenter/View/40636/CAP-combined?bidId=>

⁶ <https://cccclimateleaders.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Richmond-CA-2018-07-24.pdf>

⁷ https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=202120220AB1279

WHEREAS, AB 1243 would establish the Polluters Pay Climate Superfund Program and make the multinational fossil fuel companies that are responsible for and profit from the climate emergency pay for their damages; and

WHEREAS, Superfund Act will direct CalEPA to complete a first-of-its-kind comprehensive study of the true cost of climate damage to ensure polluters pay their fair share. The Act will hold the largest polluters accountable for the costs to California from climate damage caused by their products with compensatory fee amounts proportional to companies' self-reported past emissions from 1990-2024 and future emissions through 2045; and

WHEREAS, the funds raised by the Polluters Pay Climate Superfund Program would be deposited into the Polluters Pay Climate Superfund Fund, which, upon appropriation by the California state legislature, must be spent on "expenditures for projects and programs to mitigate, adapt, or respond to the damages and costs caused to the state from climate change;"⁸ and

WHEREAS, the policy advances California's commitment to equity and environmental justice. At least 40% of the funds from the Polluters Pay Climate Fund will go to disadvantaged communities to remedy past climate damages and build a more resilient and equitable California. The funds will support urgently needed projects such as implementing wildfire prevention measures like home hardening, upgrading stormwater management systems to prevent flooding, and installing solar panels and energy storage systems to reduce energy costs and increase resilience during power outages. Additionally, these funds could help develop urban green spaces to mitigate heat islands and improve air quality. Importantly, it could fund programs to support first responders and additional workers who provide essential services during climate disasters; and

WHEREAS, a 2023 Data for Progress poll of 1,279 voters finds 2/3 of likely voters support making major pollutant sources pay to challenge the climate crisis;⁹ and

WHEREAS, the states of Vermont and New York have already passed Climate Superfund legislation, S. 259 and S.2129-B/A.3351-B respectively, forcing polluters to pay for the environmental damage of which they are responsible, and using funds collected to support climate resilience projects to protect constituents;¹⁰ and

WHEREAS, it is crucial that local government officials endorse AB 1243/SB 684 to support passage of the bill by the full California legislature, unlike a similar bill, AB 1497 (Polluters Pay Climate Cost Recovery Act of 2024), which failed in May 2024.¹¹

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the City of Richmond strongly supports the Polluters Pay Climate Superfund Act legislative package (Legislative Package – AB 1243 (Addis, et al) and SB 684 (Menjivar, et al)), and encourages State representatives to pass it and the Governor to sign it into law; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution will be sent to Governor Gavin Newsom, Attorney General Rob Bonta, Senate President Pro Tempore Mike McGuire, Senator Jesse Arreguin (SD7), Speaker Robert Rivas, and Assemblymember Buffy Wicks (AD14).

⁸ https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=202520260AB1243

⁹ <https://www.dataforprogress.org/blog/2024/9/26/voters-strongly-support-the-polluters-pay-climate-fund-act>

¹⁰ <https://climatechange.vermont.gov/climate-superfund>
<https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-hochul-signs-landmark-legislation-creating-new-climate-superfund>

¹¹ https://calmatters.digitaldemocracy.org/bills/ca_202320240sb1497

I certify that the foregoing resolution was passed and adopted by the Council of the City of Richmond at a regular meeting thereof held on _____, by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSTENTIONS:

ABSENT:

CLERK OF THE CITY OF RICHMOND

Approved:

Mayor

Approved as to form:

City Attorney