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RESOLUTION NO. 2016-66

**A RESOLUTION OF THE ALBANY CITY COUNCIL URGING PG&E TO
ALLOW THE CITY TO SET UTILITY USER TAXES BASED ON
GREENHOUSE POLLUTION**

WHEREAS, the average surface temperature on Earth has been increasing steadily,
with the ten warmest years ever recorded all occurring since 1998; and

WHEREAS, climate scientists overwhelmingly agree that an increase in
greenhouse gases in the atmosphere—carbon dioxide (CO₂) in particular—is causing the
increase in global temperature; and

WHEREAS, humans burning carbon-based fossil fuels—coal, oil, and natural
gas—is the primary cause of the substantial and continuing increase of CO₂ in the
atmosphere; and

WHEREAS, in May, 2013, the global atmospheric concentration of CO₂ reached
400 parts per million—the highest level in the last 800,000 years; and

WHEREAS, it's predicted that by 2100 average global temperature will be 2°F to
11.5°F higher than now depending on the level of future greenhouse gas emissions; and

WHEREAS, the Environmental Protection Agency has determined that current
and future greenhouse gas concentrations endanger public health, and according to the
Global Humanitarian Forum climate change is already responsible every year for some
300,000 deaths, 325 million people seriously affected, and economic losses worldwide of
U.S. \$125 billion; and

1 **WHEREAS**, climate change caused by global warming-related greenhouse gas
2 emissions including CO₂ already is leading to large-scale problems including ocean
3 acidification and rising sea levels; more frequent, extreme, and damaging weather events
4 such as heat waves, storms, heavy rainfall and flooding, and droughts; more frequent and
5 intense wildfires; disrupted ecosystems affecting biodiversity and food production; and an
6 increase in heat related deaths; and

7
8 **WHEREAS**, scientists have concluded that by 2100 as many as one in 10 species
9 may be on the verge of extinction due to climate change; and

10
11 **WHEREAS**, rising sea levels, reduced snow pack in the Sierras, and extreme
12 weather are issues that are beginning to affect the San Francisco Bay Area; sea level rise
13 in the Bay Area is expected to increase by sixteen inches by 2050 and fifty-five inches by
14 2100; and miles of shoreline and parks could be underwater, which could result in \$62
15 billion worth of infrastructure damage in the Bay Area; and

16
17 **WHEREAS**, by mid-century, the City of Albany could see three to four times as
18 many extreme heat days as we do today with related increases in hospitalizations and
19 deaths, especially for vulnerable populations such as seniors, young children, and low-
20 income households; and

21
22 **WHEREAS**, the City of Albany has been a leader in the fight against climate
23 change, having adopted a Climate Action Plan in 2010, which aims to reduce the city's
24 carbon emissions to 25% below 2004 baseline emission levels by 2020; and

25
26 **WHEREAS**, the General Plan has ambitious greenhouse gas reduction goals of
27 60% by 2035 and net zero emissions by 2050; and

28
29

1 **WHEREAS**, the continued increase in global atmospheric CO₂ concentration
2 requires broader, more powerful policies to reduce emissions; and

3
4 **WHEREAS**, as electricity continues to become cleaner with the increase in
5 renewable sources and the implementation of the East Bay Community Energy program,
6 policymakers are looking for ways to eliminate natural gas usage to further reduce
7 greenhouse pollution from building energy use; and

8
9 **WHEREAS**, restructuring Albany's utility user tax (UUT) rates to reflect
10 greenhouse pollution could further incentivize greenhouse gas reductions; and

11
12 **WHEREAS**, Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E) currently collects Albany's UUT on
13 electricity and natural gas at the same rate, and their billing system does not currently
14 have the capability to tax them differently; and

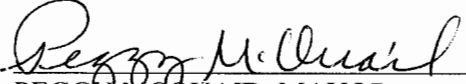
15
16 **WHEREAS**, the updated PG&E billing system will efficiently connect greenhouse gas
17 emissions to the usage of both natural gas and electricity usage; and

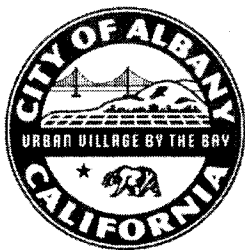
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19 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Albany City Council hereby
20 urges the PG&E to upgrade its billing system to allow for different UUT rates on
21 electricity and natural gas to reflect greenhouse pollution; and

22
23 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Albany City Council calls upon the
24 California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) to require utilities to execute requests to
25 levy different tax rates to reflect greenhouse pollution; and

26
27 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Albany City Council commits to
28 considering a restructuring of utility users taxes to reflect greenhouse pollution if this
29 capability becomes available in the future.

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PEGGY MCQUAID, MAYOR



City of Albany

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(510) 528-5710 • www.albanyca.org

RESOLUTION NO. 2016-66

PASSED AND APPROVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ALBANY,
the 19th day of December, 2016, by the following votes:

AYES: Council Members Barnes, Maass, Nason, Pilch and Mayor McQuaid

NOES: none

ABSENT: none

ABSTAINED: none

RECUSED: none

WITNESS MY HAND AND THE SEAL OF THE CITY OF ALBANY, this
20th day of December, 2016.

Eileen Harrington
DEPUTY CITY CLERK