

UNIVERSITY of **HOUSTON**

STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

Label: UB-54001

Date introduced: 6/28/17

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Sponsor(s): Vice President Hernandez, Senator Clark

Committee: Administration and Finance Committee

Draft: Final

Climate Commitment

Whereas, in 2015, carbon dioxide accounted for about 82.2% of greenhouse gas emissions from human activities¹;

Whereas, an increase in greenhouse gases causes Earth's average temperature to rise, resulting in increased flooding, hotter heat waves, stronger hurricanes, droughts, and many more adverse effects²;

Whereas, University of Houston produced 267, 219.4 metric tons of CO₂e in 2013³;

University Progress

Whereas, the Board of Regents made a decision to prioritize sustainability efforts throughout the University of Houston System in 2009⁴;

Whereas, the University of Houston was the first university in Texas to receive a Gold rating in its Sustainability Tracking, Assessment and Rating System (STARS) report;

Whereas, the University of Houston created the Office of Sustainability in the Fall of 2012;

Whereas, the University of Houston is already engaging in initiatives to reduce their carbon footprint;

Second Nature

Whereas, Second Nature is a non-profit organization that is committed to accelerating climate action in, and through, higher education;

Whereas, 679 signatory institutions across all 50 states and the District of Columbia have signed commitments with Second Nature⁵;

Whereas, the Climate Commitment focuses on integrating carbon neutrality with climate resilience and provides a systems approach to mitigating and adapting to a changing climate⁶;

Impact

Whereas, the combination of all Universities that have signed the commitment have reported a decrease of 3,759,878 metric tons of CO₂e⁵;

Whereas, the combination of all Universities that have signed the commitment have reported a 21% on average gross GHG emission reduction⁵;

Whereas, 74% of signatories who have reported progress on their Climate Action Plans state that these efforts have saved their institution money⁷.

Therefore be it resolved be the 54th Senate of the Student Government Association of the University of Houston:

The University of Houston should sign Second Nature's Climate Commitment to become a carbon neutral campus;

Further it be enacted, the University of Houston will develop a comprehensive Climate Action Plan with Second Nature;

Further it be enacted, the University of Houston will implement the Climate Action Plan to achieve a net zero carbon footprint.

Sources:

1. Environmental Protection Agency. *Inventory of U.S. Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Sinks*. Rep. N.p.: n.p., 2017. Print.
2. Kerr, Richard A. "Three degrees of consensus: climate researchers are finally homing in on just how bad greenhouse warming could get--and it seems increasingly unlikely that we will escape with a mild warming." *Science*, vol. 305, no. 5686, 2004, p. 932+. Academic OneFile, Accessed 20 June 2017.
3. Nguyen, Michael. "UH Carbon Footprint Report." *UHCarbonFootprint*. N.p., n.d. Web. 20 June 2017. <<http://uhcarbonfootprint.wixsite.com/uhcfp/overview>>.
4. *Sustainability Profile: Staff Development, Programs and Projects, and Community Engagement*. Houston: U of Houston Facilities Management, 2013. Print.
5. "Annual Report." *Second Nature 2014 Annual Report*. Second Nature, n.d. Web. 20 June 2017. <<http://annualreport.secondnature.org/2014/>>.
6. "Joining the Climate Leadership Network." *Second Nature*. N.p., n.d. Web. 20 June 2017.
7. Second Nature. *2015 Climate Leadership Network Snapshots*. Rep. N.p.: Second Nature, 2015. Print.

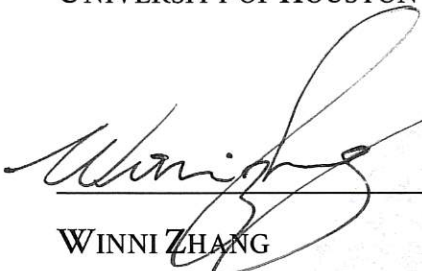
UB-54001: CLIMATE COMMITMENT



FAHAD REHAN
SPEAKER OF THE SENATE
UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON

2 8/06/2017

DATE OF SENATE APPROVAL



WINNI ZHANG
STUDENT BODY PRESIDENT
UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON

APPROVED

ACTION BY PRESIDENT

6/28/17

DATE

PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS:

UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON
PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS: