

# DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF LANE COUNTY

## Platform Committee

6/21/2018

### RESOLUTION 2018.7

A resolution of the Democratic Party of Lane County

*Relating to the Juliana v U.S. Trial and the Science-based National Climate*

*Recovery Plan the Youth Plaintiffs Seek*

**WHEREAS**, in a landmark constitutional climate case called *Juliana v. U.S.*, twenty-one courageous youth, including six youth born and raised in Lane County, have filed a lawsuit against the United States government for its role in causing and perpetuating the climate crisis in violation of the youths' rights to life, liberty, and property, and equal protection under the law, while also failing to protect essential public resources; and

**WHEREAS**, the Democratic Party of Lane County (DPLC) finds that climate change is a threat to public health, national security, food security, and business supply chains; and

**WHEREAS**, the DPLC platform obligates us to "Encourage increased efforts to abate climate change and its effects;"

**WHEREAS**, the DPLC believes climate change to be a planetary crisis demanding we "use every tool available to reduce emissions now;" and

**WHEREAS**, the DPLC is compelled by the scientific consensus that carbon dioxide emissions are the primary cause of global climate change; and

**WHEREAS**, the Democratic National Committee recently announced a ban on donations from fossil fuel money PACs; and

**WHEREAS**, mean global temperature is increasing as a result of increased atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases, primarily carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), emitted from human activities, including burning fossil fuels; and the decade from 2000 to 2010 was the warmest on record; and if trends continue 2018 will join 2017, 2016, 2015 and 2014 in being the hottest years on record; and

**WHEREAS**, CO<sub>2</sub> levels in the atmosphere have surpassed 400 parts per million (ppm) for the first time in 800,000 years, with a global annual mean of 406.5 ppm in 2017; and

**WHEREAS**, *The Third Oregon Climate Assessment Report*, issued by Oregon Climate Change Research Institute in 2017 (OCCRI Report), found that the threat posed by climate change is real and the potential impacts if climate prediction models are correct will be acute in Oregon<sup>1</sup>; and

**WHEREAS**, the DPLC recognizes that global climate change will continue to have disproportionate impacts on communities of color.

**WHEREAS**, the OCCRI Report found that if greenhouse gas emissions continue to increase, Oregon's climate is projected to warm on average 3-7°F by the 2050s and 5- 11°F by the 2080s; and that Oregon's coast will face more flooding and erosion hazards as sea levels rise, placing thousands of Oregonians and homes, and over 100 miles of roads in Oregon, at risk of inundation from annual flood events reaching 4 feet above high tide; and

**WHEREAS**, the OCCRI Report warns that the health of Oregonians is threatened, as: more frequent heat waves are expected to increase heat-related illness and death; more frequent wildfires and poor air quality are expected to increase respiratory

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<sup>1</sup> Dalton, M.M., K.D. Dello, L. Hawkins, P.W. Mote, and D.E. Rupp (2017) *The Third Oregon Climate Assessment Report*, Oregon Climate Change Research Institute, College of Earth, Ocean and Atmospheric Sciences, Oregon State University, Corvallis, OR, found on 6/14/18 at [http://www.occri.net/media/1042/ocar3\\_final\\_125\\_web.pdf](http://www.occri.net/media/1042/ocar3_final_125_web.pdf)

illnesses; warmth and extreme precipitation are expected to increase the risk of exposure to some vector- and water- borne diseases; access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food may be jeopardized; and extreme climate or weather events can diminish mental health; and

**WHEREAS**, specific to the Willamette Valley, the most densely populated and fastest-growing region in Oregon, greater risks of extreme heat events, summer water scarcity and poor air quality is expected<sup>2</sup>; and

**WHEREAS**, to have any chance of preserving the melting ice sheets and decreasing the probability of these dangerous impacts, the world's leading climate scientists tell us we must reduce dangerous levels of atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> to below 350 ppm by 2100 in order to limit the long-term average global temperature increase to less than 1°C above preindustrial temperatures; and

**WHEREAS**, the scientific prescription for achieving the 350 ppm target requires immediate and swift reductions in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions globally and an overall reduction by 96% by 2050, in addition to protecting soils and forests to sequester more carbon; if emission reductions are delayed, it will make it difficult or impossible to meet a safe target; thus, urgent and substantial reductions in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions are critical; and

**WHEREAS**, Earth's atmosphere, oceans and climate system are crucial natural resources protected under the Public Trust Doctrine and all governments have a duty to young people and future generations to protect these vital resources and take science-based action on climate change; and

**WHEREAS**, the DPLC believes that American governments should uphold and further the ideals laid down by the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution; and

**WHEREAS**, the DPLC believes where there are shortcomings, we should advocate

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<sup>2</sup> *Id.* at pp. 91-92.

solutions after gathering facts, employing reason, and considering probable consequences; and

**WHEREAS**, the voices of these youth plaintiffs represent a diverse cross section of their generation and provoke a moment of moral reckoning for our nation; and

**WHEREAS**, on November 10, 2016, U.S. District Judge Ann Aiken found that “the right to a climate system capable of sustaining human life is fundamental to a free and ordered society,” thus allowing the *Juliana v. U.S.* case to move toward trial; and

**WHEREAS**, President Trump and the heads of his executive branch agencies, now the defendants in the *Juliana* case, are using the authority given to them by Congress to double-down on the very governmental actions that have caused and perpetuated the climate chaos and the harm to our communities and our children from a fossil fuel energy system we see today; and

**WHEREAS**, if the *Juliana* youth plaintiffs are successful in their case, the federal government will be ordered to create and implement a national Climate Recovery Plan designed to phase out the United States’ fossil fuel energy system and emissions and draw down excess atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> in line with the 350 ppm by 2100 prescription, thus providing us an opportunity to avoid the worst of the predicted climate impacts, stabilize the climate system for current and future generations, protect our communities from fossil fuel pollution, and protect vital natural resources for all; and

**WHEREAS**, the DPLC is committed to building a Free, Just, Prosperous, Responsible, Secure, & Enduring society; and

**WHEREAS**, the voice of Democrats is critically needed, as we envision a society free of fossil fuels; and

**WHEREAS**, the *Juliana v. U.S.* case is set to begin trial on October 29, 2018 in federal

court, here in Eugene, Oregon, now is the time for people from *all* communities to speak out in solidarity, but especially those in Lane County and the state of Oregon.

**THEREFORE**, the Democratic Party of Lane County resolves:

**SECTION 1:** That we stand with the 21 *Juliana v U.S.* youth plaintiffs, and encourage all political parties--local and national, blue and red--to do the same by joining these brave youth and *Our Children's Trust* as a #youthvgov partner; and

**SECTION 2:** That we champion the creation and implementation of a science-based national Climate Recovery Plan premised on returning atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations to below 350 ppm by the end of the century and catalyzing a just transition away from a fossil fuel based energy system and that the Climate Recovery Plan must incorporate responses to the fact that climate change will continue to have disproportionate effects on communities of color; and

**SECTION 3:** That we encourage our members to mobilize in support of "the trial of the century" in front of the federal courthouse in Eugene, OR on the first day of the *Juliana v U.S.* trial, currently scheduled for October 29, 2018.

**Resolved by the Central Committee of the Democratic Party of Lane County,  
Assembled in Eugene, Oregon, June 21, 2018**