

STUDENT SENATE BILL 2024-1370

TITLE: Resolution Reaffirming the Obligation of UF to Address Climate Change

AUTHOR(S): Senator Austin Britton

SPONSOR(S): Deputy Minority Party Leader Isha Khan, Minority Party Leader Anamika Naidu, Pi Sigma Alpha External Affairs Director Lucas Nadeau, Senator Hunter Monson

WHEREAS, climate change is the real and defining issue of the twenty-first century that is already changing the weather and climates of the planet; and,

WHEREAS, The United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) stated in 2023 that *“human activities, principally through emissions of greenhouse gasses, have unequivocally caused global warming”* [1]; and,

WHEREAS, The IPCC additionally stated that *“widespread and rapid changes in the atmosphere, ocean, cryosphere and biosphere have occurred”* [1]; and,

WHEREAS, The IPCC additionally stated that *“in urban areas, observed climate change has caused adverse impacts on human health, livelihoods and key infrastructure”* [1]; and,

WHEREAS, The IPCC additionally stated that *“observed adverse impacts are concentrated amongst economically and socially marginalized urban residents”* [1]; and,

WHEREAS, The IPCC additionally stated that *“key barriers to adaptation are limited resources, lack of private sector and citizen engagement, insufficient mobilization of finance (including for research), low climate literacy, lack of political commitment, limited research and/or slow and low uptake of adaptation science, and low sense of urgency”* [1]; and,

WHEREAS, The IPCC additionally stated that *“Every increment of global warming will intensify multiple and concurrent hazards”* [1]; and,

WHEREAS, The IPCC additionally stated that *“there is a rapidly closing window of opportunity to secure a livable and sustainable future for all”* [1]; and,

WHEREAS, the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has released the highest-ever early forecast for the coming hurricane season [2]; and,

WHEREAS, the University of Florida has created through the Office of Sustainability a Climate Action Plan (CAP 2.0) [3]; and,

WHEREAS, creation and implementation of CAP 2.0 has stalled since 2022[3]; and,

WHEREAS, the University of Florida remains the only university within the top ten ranking from U.S News without an updated climate action plan [4-8]; and,

WHEREAS, there remains ample support among the campus population for successful climate action, as evidenced by the passage of student senate bills (SSBs) 2024-1183, 2024-1184, 2024-1185, 2024-1186 and 2024-1187; and,

WHEREAS, the passage of the student senate resolutions calling for a Green New Deal was a first for the nation [9]; and,

WHEREAS, Alachua County is in the progress of creating a county wide climate action plan [10]; and,

WHEREAS, the University of Florida does not have a liaison on the Alachua County Citizen Climate Advisory Committee; then,

THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate recognizes and reaffirms the content of SSBs 2024-1183, 2024-1184, 2024-1185, 2024-1186 and 2024-1187; and,

THEREFORE, LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate recognizes the obligation of the University of Florida to adopt and implement a climate action plan; and,

THEREFORE, LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate calls upon the University of Florida to address the climate crisis the inclusion of students, faculty, and administration with a variety of backgrounds and skillsets, especially those from historically excluded communities; and,

THEREFORE, LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate calls upon the University of Florida to enforce transparency in efforts through regular public updates regarding climate planning and action; and,

THEREFORE, LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate calls upon the University of Florida to prioritize student and faculty input at every step of planning and implementation through the creation of a Board of Trustees committee; and,

THEREFORE, LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate calls upon the University of Florida to follow the financial plan outlined in SSB 2024-1185; and,

THEREFORE, LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate release regular public updates on this financial plan; and,

THEREFORE, LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate calls upon the University of Florida to work with Alachua County on the development of the county wide climate action plan, through requesting a liaison upon the Alachua County Citizen Climate Advisory Committee; and,

THEREFORE, LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate calls upon the University of Florida to prioritize the inclusion of leaders of sustainability student organizations throughout the planning and implementation processes; and,

THEREFORE, LET IT FINALLY BE RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate recognizes the obligation of the University of Florida to make rapid progress towards equitable climate action gained as a result of the prestige of the University and challenges the University of Florida to rise to the occasion.

Proviso: A copy of this resolution shall be sent to Vice President of Business Affairs Curtis Reynolds, Office of Sustainability Director Matthew Williams, Office of Sustainability Senior Programs Director Liz Storn, and Student Body President John Brinkman.

[1] https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/syr/downloads/report/IPCC_AR6_SYR_SPM.pdf

[2] <https://www.noaa.gov/news-release/noaa-predicts-above-normal-2024-atlantic-hurricane-season>

[3] <https://sustainable.ufl.edu/campus-initiatives/uf-climate-action/planning-process/>

[4] <https://ucgreennewdealcoalition.net/>

[5] <https://planetblue.umich.edu/campus/goals/additional-sustainability-goals/climate-action/>


[6] <https://sustainability.virginia.edu/plans-progress>

[7] <https://sustainability.utexas.edu/about/planning-policy>

[8] <https://sustain.gatech.edu/georgia-tech-climate-action-plan/>

[9] <https://www.thenation.com/article/activism/university-of-florida-green-new-deal/>

[10] <https://www.gainesvillefl.gov/Government-Pages/Government/Departments/Climate-Action>

 6/20/24

Monish Vijayaraghavan Date
Senate President