

News Release

Commissioner Gwen Markham to introduce Oakland County climate action policy resolution

Net zero carbon emissions by 2050 policy to be introduced, includes progress reporting and additional Board review

April 22, 2021, OAKLAND COUNTY, MI. – In honor of Earth Day, Oakland County Commissioner **Gwen Markham** (D-Novi) will be introducing an Oakland County climate action policy resolution at the full Board of Commissioners meeting on April 29. The proposed resolution will highlight Oakland County's commitment to net zero emissions by 2050 and calls for annual reporting on the county's progress toward its goal. As the Board begins work on the 2021-2022 budget, commissioners are also considering the environmental impacts of all future county projects.

"Oakland County commissioners are ready to continue addressing the climate change emergency facing our nation," Markham said. "Today, our actions are committed toward a carbon free future in Oakland County, and I will continue to support efforts made throughout the county that make this a reality."

The resolution aims to:

- Formally adopt a county policy to achieve net zero carbon emission by 2050
- Set a goal of 50 percent carbon emission reduction by 2035
- Require county administration to provide an annual progress update to the Board on Earth Day
- Include a climate action policy consideration on all future new construction and capital improvements
- Include a climate action policy message and review in the annual budget process
- Include commissioners in the process to create a green purchasing policy and green investment policy for Oakland County departments

County Executive David Coulter announced his administration set a goal of net zero carbon emissions by 2050. Furthermore, the county has approved funding for a county environment sustainability plan and created a sustainability officer position to implement the plan. This resolution reinforces the county's

commitment to net zero emissions, and it outlines how the county will keep policy makers and the public informed about its progress.

“Climate change is real, and we all have a duty to take proactive steps to improve conditions for today and future generations,” said Board Chairman **David T. Woodward** (D-Royal Oak). “This policy formally adopts the goal and spells out how we will measure our progress on an annual basis.”

The resolution will also propose that the Oakland County Board of Commissioners join the Climate County Coalition, a project of the Climate Reality Project. The coalition works together to further a shared commitment to results-oriented strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Oakland County would join counties across the nation that are addressing climate change, investing in renewable energy and prioritizing environmental sustainability.

“The proposals in this resolution will provide paybacks in both energy savings and addressing the lasting impacts of climate change,” Oakland County Water Resources Commissioner Jim Nash said. “These investments and policies are vitally important for the overall long-term success of Oakland County and will establish us a leader in addressing this important issue.”

The Board has begun the budget planning process for fiscal year 2021-2022. When the body begins county department budget hearings, commissioners will be focused on the environmental impacts of all proposed future departmental purchases, investments, construction and capital improvements.

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