

Mark Marcoplos
Orange County Commissioner
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February 4, 2019

Subject: Urgent local government call for new direction in NC energy policy

Dear Members of the North Carolina Utilities Commission:

The undersigned local government officials urgently call for you to help us do our part to slow climate change and expand renewable energy.

The science is clear: humanity has very little time to avert irreversible climate catastrophe. The UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change reported in October that we must cut annual global greenhouse gas emissions in half by 2030. Prominent scientists say this means that emissions must peak and start downward by 2020.

Instead, U.S. carbon dioxide emissions *increased* 3.4% in 2018. Even worse is the super-potent methane being leaked from natural gas operations. We have no time to waste on the kind of business-as-usual 15-year Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) that Duke Energy is asking you to approve. Duke's plan foresees only 8% renewable energy in 2033, calls for the equivalent of 24 new large plants burning fracked gas, and would necessitate repeated rate hikes.

It is our duty and yours, as public servants, to do everything in our power to reduce greenhouse gas emissions immediately and to keep electricity affordable. Other states are already demanding more from their utilities. Virginia recently rejected Dominion Resources' IRP. The California utilities commission rejected proposals for new natural gas-burning power plants in favor of cheaper solar-plus-storage options.

In the current marketplace, plummeting solar and storage prices mean that technology is already beating natural gas on cost. New gas plants built by Duke Energy will likely become expensive stranded assets within just a few years.

We call on you to reject Duke Energy's IRP as proposed and demand that it be revised to reflect actual trends in the energy industry, which are racing toward clean, cheap, reliable renewables and storage and away from the fossil fuels that are badly disrupting our climate.

There are no economic or technical barriers to the kind of transition required by the climate crisis. The only barrier is political will. We call on you to assert that will, beginning with a rejection of Duke Energy's archaic energy generation plan.

Sincerely,

Mark Marcoplos, Commissioner, Orange County
Bill Jensen, Town Council, Apex
Audra Killingsworth, Town Council, Apex
Julie Mayfield, City Council, Asheville
Brian Haynes, City Council, Asheville
Loretta Clawson, Mayor Pro Tem, Boone
Sam Furgiuele, Town Council, Boone
Barbara Foushee, Alderman, Carrboro
Bethany Chaney, Alderman, Carrboro
Sammy Slade, Alderman, Carrboro
Lydia Lavelle, Mayor, Carrboro
Jacquie Gist, Alderman, Carrboro
Randee Haven O'Donnell, Alderman, Carrboro
Damon Seils, Alderman, Carrboro
Michael Parker, Town Council, Chapel Hill
Karen Stegman, Town Council, Chapel Hill
Pam Hemminger, Mayor, Chapel Hill
Jennifer Roberts, 58th Mayor, Charlotte
Diana Hales, Commissioner, Chatham County
Karen Howard, Commissioner, Chatham County
Steve Schewel, Mayor, Durham
Jillian Johnson, Mayor Pro Tempore, Durham
Charlie Reece, City Council, Durham
Heidi Carter, Commissioner, Durham County
Ellen Reckhow, Commissioner, Durham County
Wendy Jacobs, Commissioner, Durham County
Brenda Howerton, Commissioner, Durham County
Danielle Adams, Supervisor, Durham Soil & Water Conservation District
Kathleen Ferguson, Commissioner, Hillsborough
Jenn Weaver, Mayor Pro Tempore, Hillsborough
Matt Hughes, Commissioner, Hillsborough
Jamezetta Bedford, Commissioner, Orange County
Penny Rich, Commissioner, Orange County
Sally Greene, Commissioner, Orange County
Mark Dorosin, Commissioner, Orange County
David Cox, City Council, Raleigh
Stef Mendell, City Council, Raleigh
Russ Stephenson, City Council, Raleigh
Greg Ford, Vice Chairman, Wake County Board of Commissioners
Jenna Wadsworth, Vice-Chair, Wake County Soil & Water Conservation District