

**ACADEMIC SENATE
OF
THE CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY**

AS-3485-21/FGA (Rev)
March 18-19, 2021

**SUPPORT FOR ACTIONS TAKEN TO REDUCE CLIMATE CHANGE
AND TO PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT**

RESOLVED: That the Academic Senate of the California State University (ASCSU) support the bills introduced during spring 2021 by the California Legislature concerning actions taken to curb global climate change and preserve our environment. These bills currently include: [AB 1](#), [AB 39](#), [AB 50](#), [AB 66](#), [AB 284](#), [AB 352](#), [AB 684](#), [AB 698](#), [AB 802](#), [AB 926](#), [AB 1086](#), [AB 1110](#), [AB 1240](#), [AB 1255](#), [AB 1289](#), [AB 1395](#), [AB 1453](#), [AB 1508](#), [SB 45](#), [SB 54](#), [SB 63](#), [SB 479](#) and [SB 604](#); and be it further

RESOLVED: That the ASCSU commend the Assemblypersons and Senators of California for continuing the pioneering actions of the State of California with respect to protecting the environment, the people of California, and the world; and be it further

RESOLVED: That the ASCSU recommend that California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS) develop and implement a strategic plan to divest from corporations which do not commit to carbon neutrality consistent with Governor Brown's [Executive Order B-55-18](#); and be it further

RESOLVED: That the ASCSU distribute this resolution to the Honorable Gavin Newsom, Governor of the State of California, CSU Board of Trustees, CSU Chancellor, CSU campus Presidents, CSU campus Senate Chairs, CSU Provosts/Vice Presidents of Academic Affairs, California Faculty Association (CFA), California State Student Association (CSSA), CSU Emeritus and Retired Faculty & Staff Association (CSU ERFSA), Academic Senate for the California Community Colleges (CCC), Academic Senate of the University of California (UC), President of the California Community Colleges, Chair of the University of California Board of Regents, Senate President pro Tempore of California, Speaker of the California Assembly, Chair of the Assembly Higher Education Committee, Chair of the Assembly Budget Committee, Chair of the Assembly Banking and Finance Committee, and the Chief Executive Officer of CalPERS.

***RATIONALE:** The world is on the brink of long-term disaster with only minimal governmental actions taken to date to curb the serious damage to the earth and society if the current projection of climate change continues.*

The US has rejoined the Paris Agreement of the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). In addition, the CSU has taken steps to work toward zero-emissions, such as the rather broad installation of solar power grids on many of our campuses. Such steps are necessary, good, and to be commended.

Yet, the actions taken to date in accord with the Paris agreement may not be enough to mitigate the negative consequences for the environment resulting from the lack of local, national, and world-wide action over the past 30 years.

Science is generally united in noting the serious problems of global climate change, and the ASCSU agrees with evidence-based scientific findings concerning the need for urgent actions. It is apparent from the research, articles (and related research) indicating the peril that even current generations will face in the near future, much less the risk facing future generations of humans on this earth. But since the arguments are well-known and readily accessible, we take the approach of keeping our rationale brief.

Under “normal” circumstances, the ASCSU would deem that the broad topic of climate change is outside the purview of our primary functions. However, time is not on the side of refraining from action, and the California Legislature introduced a wide range of bills with the intent of curbing climate change. We agree with the intent of those bills, though again they tend to fall outside the purview of the Fiscal & Governmental Affairs (FGA) Committee or the ASCSU.

Many, if not all, of the CSU campuses are affected by environmental damage that is likely to be related to global climate change, for example: the fires affecting CSU Chico, Sonoma State University; drought affecting the whole State of California; water shortages and the subsequent need to plan for future water shortages; air pollution affecting especially the Los Angeles metropolitan area, and many other negative impacts on our campuses.

We also note that ASCSU tends not to be directive in terms of the investment policies of state governed bodies. For the purpose of this resolution, we make an exception, given the urgency of global climate change, and the relatively effective track record of divestment policies, such as those taken against Apartheid in South Africa during the 1980s and 90s. In addition, we note that divestment by CALPERS in fossil-fuel burning or using corporations is consistent with [California's stated goal](#) of reaching carbon neutrality by 2045, which also entails that all new cars sold in the state must have zero emissions by 2030. Consequently, we do recommend (above in our resolved clauses) that CALPERS divest itself from fossil fuel corporations over time and make no new investments within the Crude Petroleum and Natural Gas (SIC 1311) or related industries (e.g., SIC codes, 1321, 1381, 1382, 1389, or 2911). Again, timely precedent is not hard to find, as noted merely by its title: “Harvard’s Fossil Fuel Investments Aren’t Just Immoral - They’re Illegal, Too. If it’s wrong to destroy our futures, then it’s wrong for our universities to invest in that

*destruction,” (Morgan Whitten and Alex Marquardt, **The Nation**, April 8, 2021.)*

Approved – May 13-14, 2021