

Date: September 28, 2021

Proposer: DeeDee Belmares

Proposed Action: Creation of an SA Climate Ready Advisory Committee Decarbonization Subcommittee

Background:

In August the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change(IPCC) released its latest report in which UN Secretary called a "code red" for humanity. "The landmark study warns of increasingly extreme heat waves, droughts and flooding, and a key temperature limit being broken in just over a decade." We know firsthand what these weather catastrophes are like when we experience Winter Storm Uri. We saw record breaking temperatures just a few months ago in the Western United States.

But the scientific community has also said that these catastrophes can be avoided if the world acts quickly to dramatically cut emissions of greenhouse gasses. In short, the report is saying that if we want a habitable planet in which to live, we must cut emissions from sources like our Spruce Coal Plant.

The CAAP calls for our city to be carbon neutral by 2050. We can't wait until then to cut emissions. In just 9 years we need to have a 41% reduction in GHG emissions by 2030. By 2040 we will need to cut GHG emissions by 71%. According to the 2019 San Antonio GHG Inventory, "San Antonio's total community emissions decreased only .2% between 2016 and 2019."

The two Spruce Coal units are the largest single greenhouse gas-emitting facilities in Bexar County, spewing nearly 8 million metric tons of carbon pollution every year. The coal units, located on the southeast side have serious health impacts on our most vulnerable: 80% of the population that live within 12 miles of the coal plant are people of color; 23% live in poverty.

State health data show that compared to other Texas cities, San Antonio has a relatively high rate of children getting sent to hospitals or urgent-care clinics due to asthma attacks.

Main goals:

1. Call for the closure of the Spruce Coal Plant no later than 2030 and transition the two units to renewable energy sources-solar, wind and battery.
2. Work with CPS Energy to further decarbonize our energy supply through the Flexible Path to meet the 2030 emissions reduction target.

During our meetings we can expect to study cities that are taking bold steps to decarbonize their energy supply; bring in people doing similar work in other cities to share their best practices; possibly partner with CPS Energy's Rate Advisory Committee Working Group on Energy Generation; and make recommendations to the CAAP committees, CPS Energy, city council to adopt strategies for decarbonization.

Time Commitment: Twice a month one hour subcommittee meetings