



STATE OF MICHIGAN
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
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EXECUTIVE DIRECTIVE

No. 2019-12

To: State Department Directors and Autonomous Agency Heads
From: Governor Gretchen Whitmer
Date: February 4, 2019
Re: Responding to Climate Change

The Fourth National Climate Assessment issued in November of 2018 by the federal government indicated that the earth's climate is now changing faster than at any point in the history of modern civilization, primarily as a result of human activities. The Climate Assessment concluded:

- climate change creates new risks and exacerbates existing vulnerabilities in communities across the United States, presenting growing challenges to human health and safety, quality of life, and the rate of economic growth;
- without substantial and sustained global mitigation and regional adaptation efforts, climate change is expected to cause growing losses to American infrastructure and property and impede the rate of economic growth over this century;
- climate change affects the natural, built, and social systems we rely on individually and through their connections to one another;
- while mitigation and adaptation efforts have expanded substantially in the last four years, they do not yet approach the scale considered necessary to avoid substantial damages to the economy, environment, and human health over the coming decades;
- impacts from climate change on extreme weather and climate-related events, air quality, and the transmission of disease through insects and pests, food, and water increasingly threaten the health and well-being of the American people, particularly populations that are already vulnerable;
- the quality and quantity of water available for use by people and ecosystems across the country are being affected by climate change, increasing risks and costs to agriculture, energy production, industry, recreation, and the environment;

- climate change increasingly threatens indigenous communities' livelihoods, economies, health, and cultural identities by disrupting interconnected social, physical, and ecological systems;
- ecosystems and the benefits they provide to society are being altered by climate change, and these impacts are projected to continue;
- rising temperatures, extreme heat, drought, wildfire on rangelands, and heavy downpours are expected to increasingly disrupt agricultural productivity in the United States;
- our nation's aging and deteriorating infrastructure is further stressed by increases in heavy precipitation events, coastal flooding, heat, wildfires, and other extreme events, as well as changes to average precipitation and temperature;
- coastal communities and the ecosystems that support them are increasingly threatened by the impacts of climate change; and
- outdoor recreation, tourist economies, and quality of life are reliant on benefits provided by our natural environment that will be degraded by the impacts of climate change in many ways.

The impacts of global climate change are already being felt in the United States, including Michigan, and are projected to intensify in the future. Climate change is lowering water tables in the Great Lakes Basin, decreasing total wetland area in Michigan, and stimulating algae blooms.

The severity of future impacts of climate change will depend largely on actions taken to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to adapt to the changes that will occur.

Unfortunately for Michigan's future, the federal government has retreated from such action, and withdrawn the United States from the Paris Agreement entered into by parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change on December 12, 2015 (the "Paris Agreement").

If the federal government will not respond to climate change, Michigan must. A bipartisan coalition of governors from 19 other states has committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions consistent with the goals of the Paris Agreement by forming the United States Climate Alliance.

Smart, coordinated state action can ensure that the United States continues to contribute to the global effort to address climate change. States leading the United States Climate Alliance recognize that climate change presents a serious threat to the environment and our residents, communities, and economy. Alliance participants are growing clean energy economies and creating new jobs, while reducing air pollution, improving public health, and building more resilient communities. Despite the U.S. federal government's decision to withdraw from the Paris Agreement, Alliance members are committed to supporting the

international agreement, and are pursuing climate action to make progress toward its goals.

It is time for Michigan to join the effort.

Acting pursuant to sections 1 and 8 of article 5 of the Michigan Constitution of 1963, I direct the following:

1. As chief executive officer, I commit the State of Michigan to:
 - (a) Implement policies that advance the goals of the Paris Agreement, aiming to reduce greenhouse gas emission by at least 26-28 percent below 2005 levels by 2025.
 - (b) Track and report progress to the global community in appropriate settings, including when the world convenes to take stock of the Paris Agreement.
 - (c) Accelerate new and existing policies to reduce carbon pollution and promote clean energy deployment at the state and federal level.
2. State departments and autonomous agencies subject to supervision by the governor under section 8 of article 5 of the Michigan Constitution of 1963 shall act, including when implementing and administering state laws, in a manner consistent with the commitments under section 1 of this directive.
3. The director of the Department of Environmental Quality shall coordinate state efforts under this directive, including any recommendations for changes in state policies, procedures, administrative rules, or laws, and can assist departments and agencies with any questions that may arise with implementation of this directive. The director of the Department of Environmental Quality shall regularly report to me on efforts to implement this directive.
4. This directive is effective immediately.

Thank you for your cooperation in implementing this directive.


Gretchen Whitmer
Governor