



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

EXECUTIVE ORDER #52

Relating to the Creation of the Governor's Task Force on Climate Change

WHEREAS, climate change is a grave threat to the health, safety, and economic well-being of people and communities throughout the State of Wisconsin;

WHEREAS, according to the Fourth National Climate Assessment conducted by the United States Global Change Research Program, "Earth's climate is now changing faster than at any point in the history of modern civilization, primarily as a result of human activities";

WHEREAS, research by the Wisconsin Initiative on Climate Change Impacts projects increases in extreme weather in Wisconsin over the next century, including significant changes of temperature at both ends of the spectrum and a 75 percent probability that annual average precipitation will increase;

WHEREAS, the rise and frequency of extreme weather associated with climate change leads to health risks associated with air and water quality, extreme heat, and storm related hazards for all Wisconsinites;

WHEREAS, the changing climate threatens Wisconsin's multi-billion-dollar agricultural and dairy industries and products grown and produced in Wisconsin such as beer, ginseng, and cranberries;

WHEREAS, farmers in Wisconsin, as innovators and stewards of our land and resources, are an integral part of the solution to addressing climate change through alternative energy opportunities;

WHEREAS, climate change will affect jobs across all industries and occupations, including farming, food processing, construction, manufacturing, insurance, retail, leisure, healthcare, and energy, by changing what goods and services businesses offer and how they produce and transport those goods and services;

WHEREAS, Wisconsin's tourism industry is also significantly affected by climate change with a shortened winter recreational season for ice fishing, snowmobiling, and cross-country skiing, and rising lake and river temperatures harming recreational fishing;

WHEREAS, climate change also exacerbates existing threats to communities of color and low-income communities;

WHEREAS, communities of color and low-income communities often experience the first and worst consequences of climate change and have long been on the frontlines of this battle, and therefore, environmental, climate, and economic policy must incorporate justice and equity for people of color and low-income communities;

WHEREAS, Wisconsin's Native Nations are the original keepers of this land and its ecosystems, and stewardship and sustainability are woven into their ways of life, and climate change poses an immediate threat to their well-being, cultural practices such as hunting and spearfishing, and to Indigenous foods like wild rice;

WHEREAS, according to the United States Global Change Research Program, "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";

WHEREAS, the State of Wisconsin has agreed to fulfill the carbon reduction goals of the 2015 Paris Climate Accord, set a goal to ensure all electricity consumed in Wisconsin is 100 percent carbon-free by 2050, and is committed to working with businesses and industry to reduce emissions through pollution prevention and improved energy efficiency; and

WHEREAS, to ensure economic growth and development and provide responsible environmental stewardship, assist in developing sustainable job opportunities for those displaced by the impacts and costs of climate change, we must do more to continue build resilient communities and develop strategies to mitigate, adapt to, and prepare for climate-related effects in Wisconsin.

NOW THEREFORE, I, TONY EVERS, Governor of the State of Wisconsin, by the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of this State, including Section 14.019 of the Wisconsin Statutes, hereby create the Governor's Task Force on Climate Change ("Task Force") and order the following:

1. The Task Force shall be chaired by the Lieutenant Governor or a designee. The Governor shall appoint additional task force members as follows to serve at the pleasure of the Governor:
 - a. The Secretary of the Department of Natural Resources or a designee;
 - b. The Secretary of the Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection or a designee;
 - c. The Secretary of the Department of Workforce Development or a designee;
 - d. Two members of the Wisconsin State Assembly, one representing each caucus;
 - e. Two members of the Wisconsin State Senate, one representing each caucus; and
 - f. Other individuals who may include individuals representing the business community, the agricultural community, utility companies, organized labor, the tourism industry, Native Nations, and institutions of higher education.

2. The Task Force shall advise and assist the Governor in developing a strategy to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change for the benefit of all Wisconsin communities. The Task Force shall do the following:
 - a. Assess the best-available scientific research from both state and national sources to evaluate the impacts of climate change on the state's citizens and environment;
 - b. Review actions already taken by Wisconsin cities, counties, and Native Nations and other states to address climate change;
 - c. Work with the University of Wisconsin System, the Wisconsin Technical College System, other state educational institutions, and Wisconsin's business community to support innovative climate-smart research, engineering, design, and manufacturing, including low emissions technologies in areas such as transportation, materials engineering, agricultural productivity, manufacturing, and natural resource management. Strategies should seek to integrate appropriate plans for equitable economic development, workforce development, and technology transfer;
 - d. Host public hearings throughout Wisconsin to hear stakeholder input on how extreme weather, rising lake and river temperatures, increased emissions, and other effects of climate change are affecting the health and well-being of individuals, communities, and their economies;
 - e. Consult with Tribal Governments to coordinate efforts in addressing climate change and ensure recommendations address the unique threats climate change poses to Native Nations; and
 - f. Make recommendations to meaningfully address the effects of climate change and create a clean energy economy in Wisconsin that supports sustainable job opportunities, which may include legislative, legal, regulatory, or community-based initiatives.
3. The Task Force shall be staffed by the Department of Administration.
4. The Task Force shall work closely with the Office of Sustainability and Clean Energy to identify new, cost-effective conservation, sustainability, and efficiency strategies for the state and prepare Wisconsin for climate change by incorporating climate adaptation strategies into existing planning.
5. All executive branch agencies shall aid the Task Force to the greatest extent possible, including:
 - a. Making technical staff available to assist the Task Force as necessary and as practicable given agency staffing needs; and
 - b. Providing information and data needed by the Task Force to perform its duties.
6. The Department of Natural Resources shall do the following:
 - a. Work with the Wisconsin Initiative on Climate Change Impacts (WICCI) and the University of Wisconsin Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies to update and re-issue WICCI's 2011 report "Wisconsin's Changing Climate: Impacts and Adaptation";

- b. Collect updated, impartial scientific data on the rate of climate change in Wisconsin and its impact on Wisconsin's natural environment; and
 - c. Make its scientific data available to the Task Force.
7. The Task Force shall issue a report detailing the Task Force's work and recommendations to the Governor on or before August 31, 2020. The Task Force shall provide additional reports and recommendations when requested by the Governor.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great seal of the State of Wisconsin to be affixed. Done in the City of Milwaukee this seventeenth day of October in the year of two thousand nineteen.

TONY EVERS
Governor

By the Governor:

DOUGLAS LA FOLLETTE
Secretary of State