

February 21, 2022

The North Carolina Utilities Commission  
4325 Mail Service Center  
Raleigh, NC 27599-4300

Subj: Docket E-100 Sub 179  
Session Law 2021-165 (HB 951): North Carolina Carbon Plan

The Chatham County Board of Commissioners (Board) fully and strongly supports the carbon plan mandate contained in HB 951 (Session Law 2021-165). That statute requires the NCUC to develop a plan by December 31 to reduce the CO2 emissions from electric generating facilities by 70% from their 2005 levels and reach this goal by year 2030, with expectation to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050.

NCUC is the only public body in North Carolina that can hold utilities accountable by requiring them to charge just and reasonable rates and by overseeing their reliability and planning. It has appropriately been charged in HB 951 with the duty of requiring reduction in carbon emissions in order to ameliorate the enormous global warming problem. To accomplish that objective, NCUC has required Duke Energy to submit a draft plan by May 16, 2022.

North Carolina has already acknowledged and acted on the climate problem. For example, on October 29, 2018 Governor Roy Cooper's Executive Order No. 80 committed North Carolina "to address climate change and transition to a clean energy economy."

The Chatham County Board of Commissioners has also acted. The Board adopted a resolution in June 2017 "Supporting a State and National Goal of 100% Clean Energy by 2050 and the Creation of Green Jobs" which encouraged the state of North Carolina to convert all electrical utilities to rely exclusively on renewables or carbon-free sources by January 1, 2050. And at its June 18, 2018 meeting the Board unanimously supported a citizen request to assess the feasibility and economics of solarizing County buildings and other facilities. The Board had established its Climate Change Advisory Committee in 2016 and later received a greenhouse gas inventory for the County and a climate action plan.

The carbon plan ordered by HB 951 will be of great assistance to Chatham County in its ongoing efforts to reduce carbon emissions produced in the County. The Board is now in the process of assessing and implementing 10 specific climate recommendations that it has received from its Climate Change Advisory Committee. These include, for example, proposals to provide broader protection for County lands and trees; to establish carbon management demonstration gardens in parks and greenways; to support and encourage agriculture, which produces carbon but also supplies food and substantial carbon sequestration; and to encourage the expansion of County and citizen electric vehicle fleets. These goals are in addition to the county's existing project of solarizing County buildings.

The reduction of carbon emissions required by the carbon plan to be produced in accordance with HB 951 will be of enormous assistance to Chatham County in all of its efforts to confront the climate crisis. Your action must be bold, now, to mitigate a future calamity. Accordingly, the Chatham County Board strongly encourages NCUC to demand the production of a responsible draft plan from Duke Energy, and to make any necessary changes to ensure that the plan adopted by the end of 2022 is fully adequate to the challenge and meets the targets of HB 951.

Sincerely,

Karen A. Howard  
Chair, Chatham County Board of Commissioners

Cc: Members of North Carolina Utilities Commission

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