

## 2013-K677

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION urging the New York State Congressional delegation to support reducing greenhouse gas pollution under the Clean Air Act

WHEREAS, The decade from 2000 to 2010 was the warmest on record; according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), 2005 and 2010 tied for the hottest years on record, while January through September 2012, were the warmest nine months of any year on record for the contiguous United States; and

WHEREAS, The current level of CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere is approximately 392 parts per million (ppm) according to NOAA; and

WHEREAS, In 2008, one of the world's leading climate scientists, Dr. James Hansen stated: If humanity wishes to preserve a planet similar to that on which civilization developed and to which life on Earth is adapted, paleoclimate evidence and climate change suggests that CO<sub>2</sub> will need to be reduced to 350 ppm or lower; and

WHEREAS, The Environmental Protection Agency determined that current and future greenhouse gas concentrations endanger public health; according to the Global Humanitarian Forum, climate change is already responsible for some 300,000 deaths, seriously affecting 325 million people, and economic losses worldwide of US \$125 billion; and

WHEREAS, Extreme weather events, most notably heat waves and precipitation extremes, are striking with increased frequency, with deadly consequences for people and wildlife; in the United States alone, a record 14 weather and climate disasters occurred, including droughts, heat waves, and floods, that cost at least \$1 billion each in damages and loss of human lives; and

WHEREAS, Climate change is affecting food security as crop growth and yields diminish and droughts, floods and changes in snowpack depth are

disrupting water supplies; and

WHEREAS, Scientists have concluded that as many as 10 species may be on the verge of extinction due to climate change; and

WHEREAS, The world's land-based ice is rapidly melting threatening water supplies in many regions and raising sea levels; arctic summer ice extent has been decreased to about half of what it was several decades ago with an accompanying drastic reduction in sea-ice thickness and volume, which is severely jeopardizing ice-dependent animals like polar bears; and

WHEREAS, The sea level is rising faster along the East Coast than it has for at least 2,000 years; this is accelerating in pace and could rise by one to three feet before the end of this century, threatening millions of Americans with severe flooding; and

WHEREAS, For four decades, the Clean Air Act has protected the air we breathe through a proven, comprehensive and successful system of pollution control that saves lives and creates economic benefits exceeding its costs by many times; and

WHEREAS, With the Clean Air Act, air quality in this country has improved significantly since 1970, despite major growth both in our economy and industrial pollution; and

WHEREAS, Between 1970 and 1990, the six main pollutants covered by the Clean Air Act-particulate matter and ground-level ozone (both of which contribute to smog and asthma), carbon monoxide, lead, sulfur and nitrogen oxides (the pollutants that cause acid rain) were reduced by between 47% and 93%, and airborne lead was virtually eliminated; and

WHEREAS, The US Supreme Court ruled in Massachusetts vs. EPA (2007) that greenhouse gases are "air pollutants" as defined by the Clean Air

Act and the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the New York State Congressional delegation be and hereby is respectfully memorialized by this Legislative Body to urge the

New York State Congressional delegation to support reducing greenhouse gas pollution under the Clean Air Act; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to each member of the Congressional delegation from the State of New York, Administrator of the EPA, and the Clean Air Act Coalition.