

1 **JOINT RESOLUTION FOR ESTABLISHING A STATE**

2 **SOCIAL COST OF CARBON**

3 2023 GENERAL SESSION

4 STATE OF UTAH

5 **Chief Sponsor: Jennifer Dailey-Provost**

6 Senate Sponsor: _____

7

LONG TITLE

8 **General Description:**

9 This resolution addresses a state social cost of carbon.

10 **Highlighted Provisions:**

11 This resolution:

- 12 ▶ recognizes the role of greenhouse gas emissions in driving global climate change;
- 13 ▶ recognizes the significant risks posed by climate change to economic, human, and
- 14 natural systems;
- 15 ▶ describes "social cost of carbon" estimates and their use in federal and state
- 16 policymaking;
- 17 ▶ resolves that the Legislature promotes the development or adoption of state social
- 18 cost of carbon estimates; and
- 19 ▶ resolves that social cost of carbon estimates be regularly updated.

20 **Special Clauses:**

21 None

22

Be it resolved by the Legislature of the state of Utah:

23 WHEREAS, according to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, greenhouse

24 gas emissions are driving climate change;

25 WHEREAS, greenhouse gases include carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, and



28 fluorinated gases, but carbon dioxide emissions account for 76% of global greenhouse gas
29 emissions, according to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA);

30 WHEREAS, the EPA reports that atmospheric greenhouse gas concentrations have
31 increased since the beginning of the industrial era, and that the current global atmospheric
32 concentrations of carbon dioxide are unprecedented compared with the past 800,000 years;

33 WHEREAS, the consequences of climate change include rising global temperatures as
34 well as severe drought, water scarcity, more severe storms and wildfires, rising sea levels,
35 flooding, melting polar ice, and declining biodiversity;

36 WHEREAS, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) finds numerous studies
37 have concluded that climate change imposes significant risks to economic systems and the
38 environment;

39 WHEREAS, the "social cost of carbon" (SCC) estimates the cost of long-term net
40 damage to society caused by an increase in carbon dioxide emissions in a given year, typically
41 expressed in dollars per metric ton of new carbon dioxide emitted;

42 WHEREAS, to develop SCC estimates, analysts use economic models known as
43 integrated assessment models;

44 WHEREAS, integrated assessment models translate carbon dioxide emissions into
45 projected temperature changes, physical impacts, and damages from climate change;

46 WHEREAS, according to the EPA, SCC estimates reflect a wide range of anticipated
47 damages resulting from rising global temperatures, including net changes in agricultural
48 activity, human health, property damage from increased flood risk, and changes in energy
49 system costs;

50 WHEREAS, in 2010 an interagency working group finalized the first federal SCC
51 estimates;

52 WHEREAS, federal agencies use SCC estimates to analyze the net damage or cost of
53 proposed rules or regulations that affect carbon dioxide emissions;

54 WHEREAS, the GAO found that by 2020 at least nine states called for using an SCC
55 based on prior federal estimates in state decision making;

56 WHEREAS, SCC estimates allow state policy makers to evaluate, quantify, and
57 compare the costs and benefits of different policy options;

58 WHEREAS, SCC estimates can also inform the design of policies intended to reduce

59 carbon dioxide emissions, including a state carbon tax, which economists argue can be one of
60 the most cost effective ways to reduce carbon emissions; and

61 WHEREAS, in a January 2017 report, the National Academies of Sciences,
62 Engineering, and Medicine made recommendations for updating the methodologies used to
63 estimate the social cost of carbon to reflect the best available science:

64 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of the State of Utah
65 promotes the development or adoption of state SCC estimates calculated using the best
66 practices recommended by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine
67 and the use of those estimates in the evaluation and design of state policy, including a state
68 carbon tax.

69 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature supports the regular update of state
70 SCC estimates based on the future guidance and recommendations of experts, including the
71 National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine.