

By: Raymond

H.C.R. No. 127

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1 WHEREAS, Climate change is a complex issue with important
2 implications for economic stability, national security, and public
3 health for future generations of Texans; and

4 WHEREAS, United States Secretary of State Rex Tillerson, in
5 his confirmation hearing, acknowledged the "complex issue" of
6 climate change; he stated: "I came to my personal position over
7 about 20 years as an engineer and a scientist, [and] understanding
8 the evolution of the science, came to the conclusion a few years ago
9 the risk of climate change does exist, and that the consequences
10 could be serious enough that action should be taken"; and

11 WHEREAS, In February 2017, the Climate Leadership Council
12 released a compelling report outlining the conservative case for
13 addressing climate change; the international research and advocacy
14 group's members include one of the Lone Star State's most respected
15 native sons, former U.S. secretary of state James Baker, as well as
16 members of the Ronald Reagan administration and both Bush
17 administrations, namely Martin Feldstein and N. Gregory Mankiw,
18 former chairs of the President's Council of Economic Advisers,
19 Henry M. Paulson Jr., former secretary of the treasury, George P.
20 Shultz, former secretary of state, and Thomas Stephenson, former
21 ambassador to Portugal and now a partner at Sequoia Capital; the
22 organization's other members are Rob Walton, longtime chair of
23 Walmart, and Ted Halstead, founder, president, and CEO of the
24 Climate Leadership Council and founder of the New America think

1 tank; and

2 WHEREAS, The council's report states that evidence of climate
3 change is too powerful to ignore; although the extent of human
4 influence on climate is debated, the risks posed are such that the
5 world needs a kind of "insurance policy," the authors warn; climate
6 solutions based on sound economic analysis would build prosperity,
7 benefit working Americans, reduce regulations, and protect our
8 natural heritage; and

9 WHEREAS, In the Reagan era, economists conducted a
10 cost-benefit analysis to assess the risks of the growing hole in the
11 ozone layer, and the president then threw his weight behind a
12 landmark treaty, the Montreal Protocol, which implemented a
13 pragmatic, market-based solution to the environmental problem;
14 Mr. Baker, Mr. Shultz, and the other members of the Climate
15 Leadership Council support a similar conservative,
16 limited-government approach to climate change, and economists of
17 diverse viewpoints today concur that the economic benefits of
18 grappling with climate change greatly outweigh the costs; for
19 instance, while no single natural disaster can be attributed to
20 climate change, it has increased the risk of catastrophic events
21 such as Superstorm Sandy, Hurricane Ike, Hurricane Rita, and
22 Hurricane Katrina, which affected the entire Gulf Coast region; in
23 2016, the National Centers for Environmental Information recorded
24 15 weather and climate disaster events that each exceeded \$1
25 billion in costs, the largest being the Louisiana flooding and
26 Hurricane Matthew, which both inflicted an estimated \$10 billion in
27 damage; and

1 WHEREAS, Many of the nation's leaders have spoken out about
2 the need to address climate change, including former vice president
3 Al Gore, who said, "Solutions to the climate crisis are within
4 reach, but in order to capture them we must take urgent action today
5 across every level of society"; former president Barack Obama
6 stated that "the shift to a cleaner energy economy won't happen
7 overnight, and it will require tough choices along the way. But the
8 debate is settled. Climate change is a fact. And when our
9 children's children look us in the eye and ask if we did all we could
10 to leave them a safer, more stable world, with new sources of
11 energy, I want us to be able to say yes, we did"; another former
12 president, Bill Clinton, explained that "climate change is more
13 remote than terror but a more profound threat to the future of the
14 children and the grandchildren and the great-grandchildren I hope
15 all of you have. . . . It's the only thing we face today that has
16 the power to remove the preconditions of civilized society"; and

17 WHEREAS, Climate change will negatively impact agriculture,
18 coastal cities, and political stability in already-volatile
19 regions of the world, and such developments could imperil our
20 American way of life; leaders in Washington, D.C., should
21 investigate how best to mitigate the dangers to ensure a stable,
22 prosperous future for the generations to come, for as the current
23 U.S. secretary of defense, General James Mattis, declared, "Climate
24 change is impacting stability in areas of the world where our troops
25 are operating today"; now, therefore, be it

26 RESOLVED, That the 85th Legislature of the State of Texas
27 hereby respectfully urge the United States Congress to conduct a

1 cost-benefit analysis regarding the risks of climate change and
2 appropriate measures to address those risks; and, be it further

3 RESOLVED, That the Texas secretary of state forward official
4 copies of this resolution to the president of the United States, to
5 the president of the Senate and the speaker of the House of
6 Representatives of the United States Congress, and to all the
7 members of the Texas delegation to Congress with the request that
8 this resolution be entered in the Congressional Record as a
9 memorial to the Congress of the United States of America.