



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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BROAD COALITION BACKS CLIMATE EMERGENCY DECLARATION AT ALL CAPE TOWN MEETINGS
Environmental Activists Joined by Nonprofits, Faith Communities and Others

YARMOUTH, Mass. Feb. 25, 2020 — A grassroots coalition of environmental activists joined by nonprofits, institutions, and faith communities has filed citizen petitions to place a Declaration of Climate Emergency on every Cape Cod town meeting warrant this spring. Known as the Cape Cod Climate Emergency Initiative, the coalition is focusing attention and action on the urgent need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to net zero in every town on Cape Cod at the earliest time feasible.

Spearheaded by 350 Cape Cod, the Cape Cod Climate Emergency Initiative comprises a broad coalition of citizen activists and organizations, perhaps the widest ever assembled on Cape Cod. The coalition includes the Cape Cod Climate Change Collaborative, Center for Coastal Studies, 350 Cape Cod, Association to Preserve Cape Cod, Sierra Club Cape Cod, Citizens' Climate Lobby South Shore/Cape Cod, Extinction Rebellion Cape Cod, and the Faith Communities Environmental Network, a Climate Collaborative affiliate representing nearly 30 faith institutions throughout Cape Cod and the Islands. The Initiative's coalition ranks are growing daily.

Richard Delaney—founder of the Cape Cod Climate Change Collaborative, president of the Center for Coastal Studies, and a widely respected coastal/climate expert—described the urgent need for an emergency climate response in each town. “Cape Cod and the Islands is an epicenter of the climate crisis worldwide, and the science is incontrovertible: carbon emissions must be reduced to net zero as soon as possible to avert a climate catastrophe. But we can't wait for the federal or state government to lead the way. Now is the time for comprehensive and concerted local action, Cape-wide, by town citizens, employees, businesses and elected officials to collaborate as teams to achieve net zero within each town as soon as possible.”

Individuals and local citizen groups began filing emergency resolutions in late December. The first was filed in Yarmouth, quickly followed by Brewster, Chatham, Dennis, Eastham, Falmouth, Harwich, Mashpee, Truro and Wellfleet, with remaining filings completed today in Orleans, Provincetown and Sandwich. Similar initiatives will take place in Barnstable and Bourne in early March.

While petitions vary from town to town, all incorporate the central theme expressed in Falmouth's resolution, described below:

“Be it resolved that the Town of Falmouth recognizes that the climate emergency, driven by human activity including energy consumption and land use practices and leading to global warming, rising seas, deadly storms, dangerous heat waves, acidifying oceans, and melting ice sheets, poses a threat to the health, safety and economic security of the residents of the Town. The Town of Falmouth therefore adopts as its policy the objective of reducing net greenhouse gas emissions from human activity within and by the Town to zero at the earliest technically and economically feasible time, and directs that all officers and departments of the Town take such measures within the scope of their respective responsibilities and authority as may be necessary and prudent to facilitate such policy and objective.”

Local citizens are leading the charge in each community by forming “climate action networks” to help educate and mobilize fellow townspeople. A leader of Falmouth's initiative and vice-chair of 350 Cape Cod, Rosemary Dreger Carey explains, “This new coalition combines the organizing strengths of grassroots groups like 350 with the resources of the Cape's scientific and institutional leaders. The energy we've seen rising in every town since the launch of this initiative demonstrates that the climate crisis is not cause for despair, rather an opportunity for collaborative action by citizens, institutions and municipalities alike to save our region...and the planet.”

Organizations wishing more information about joining the Cape Cod Climate Emergency Initiative or citizens seeking to join a local climate action network should contact **Barry Margolin** at capecodclimate350@gmail.com or **Fran Schofield** at Fran@capecodclimate.org.

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