

Midway City Council  
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Regular Meeting

Climate Change Op-Ed

## Climate Change Needs Utah

Climate change needs Utah.

It needs Utah to lead locally and forge solutions aligned with our values and strengths. It needs bipartisan solutions that break down artificial political silos. It needs us to act today so healthy communities still exist tomorrow.

As local government leaders from ## Utah communities, we applaud the state legislature in their 2018 passage of [House Concurrent Resolution 7](#). The resolution encourages the “use of sound science to address the causes of a changing climate and support innovation....” and it garnered national attention. If Utah surprised the rest of the country by our ability to transcend politics and adopt this resolution, we are excited to see reactions as we act on those intentions.

Utahns views are aligned with the [scientific consensus](#) on climate change and demonstrate a willingness to act. A [2017 poll](#) commissioned by The Salt Lake Tribune and the University of Utah’s Hinckley Institute of Politics shows that 71% of Utahns say climate change is real and 64% believe the issue is exacerbated by human activity.

Along with local concern about climate change, a few other things are warming up in Utah:

- *Temperatures:* Utah is warming at twice the global rate in recent decades according to data from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. This impacts everything from our air quality to our water supplies to the intensity and duration of the wildfire season. This year proves no exception, with extreme events such as the Dollar Ridge and West Valley fires destroying property and [costing taxpayers](#) tens of millions of dollars.
- *Clean Energy Trends:* For the second year in a row, Utah ranks as a top 10 state for solar installations according to the Solar Energy Industry Association. With over 6,000 solar jobs, Utah now ranks fourth in per-capita solar employment nationally. Clean air electric vehicle adoption is also on the rise and Utah is a leading innovator in the development of EV charging corridors.
- *Climate Leadership:* A desire to address climate change is also spurring new initiatives and partnerships. Path to Positive Utah is a collaboration platform supporting over 40 leaders across all sectors. The Utah Climate Action Network has convened local experts and solution-seekers since 2016. Additionally, Citizens’ Climate Lobby has six active local chapters inspiring non-partisan dialogue and optimism.

As Utahns, we clearly have cause for concern, but also cause for hope. Let’s transform that hope into action.

Let’s harness local values of stewardship and accountability to accelerate positive development trends that cut carbon pollution and curtail rising temperatures.

Let’s collaborate across political lines and geographic boundaries to share solutions, encourage thoughtful policy and accelerate innovation.

Let’s lead in ways that continue to surprise and inspire others nationally.

There are not enough examples of Americans coming together to discuss climate change and creatively forge solutions. There are not enough examples like what Utah can offer.

We have already begun implementing climate solutions in our cities, counties and towns. We ask that you support these efforts and encourage other communities and state leaders to join us.

Let's seize the moment and build from recent breakthroughs. Let's be the inspiring example that climate change so desperately needs.

*[Signatories – Local Government Elected Officials in Utah]*