RESOLUTION NO. 53-10 INTRODUCED BY THE SUSTAINABILITY POLICY COMMITTEE TO ADOPT A CLIMATE SMART COMMUNITIES PLEDGE, AS DEVELOPED BY THE NYS DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION.

WHEREAS, the Sullivan County Legislature unanimously adopted Resolution No. 429-07 on September 27, 2007 that committed to promoting a sustainable future by accepting a Green Vision Statement, and

WHEREAS, it is in the public interest to expand upon that commitment as detailed in Resolution No. 429-07 by adopting a climate smart communities pledge as developed by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, and

WHEREAS, the County of Sullivan (“County”) believes that potential climate change may pose a real and increasing threat to our local and global environments which is primarily due to the burning of fossil fuels; and

WHEREAS, the effects of potential climate change may endanger our infrastructure, economy and livelihoods; harm our farms, orchards, ecological communities, including native fish and wildlife populations; spread invasive species and exotic diseases; reduce drinking water supplies and recreational opportunities; and pose health threats to our citizens; and

WHEREAS, our response to potential climate change provides us with an unprecedented opportunity to save money, and to build livable, energy-independent and secure communities, vibrant innovation economies, healthy and safe schools, and resilient infrastructures; and

WHEREAS, the scale of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reductions required for climate stabilization will require sustained and substantial efforts; and

WHEREAS, that even if emissions were dramatically reduced today, communities may still be required to adapt to the effects of potential climate change for decades to come.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Sullivan County Legislature hereby adopts the following public policy goals, in order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to a changing climate, the County shall establish public policy goals that will:

1. Pledge to Combat Climate Change by Becoming a Climate Smart Community
Set goals to reduce GHG emissions and adapt to predicted climatic changes. Establish a task force of local officials and community members to review the issues and propose a plan of action. Authorize the County Manager to designate a County employee as the point person who will oversee climate change initiatives and publicly report on progress. Work cooperatively with similar task forces in neighboring communities to ensure that efforts complement and reinforce one another. As an official signal of commitment and for access to technical resources, sign on to a widespread climate campaign.
2. Set Goals, Inventory Emissions, Move to Action
Gather data, inventory GHG emissions, and establish baselines for local government operations and community sectors as warranted. Develop quantifiable interim GHG emission targets consistent with emission reduction goals and propose a schedule and financing strategy to meet them. Encourage stakeholder and public input and develop an action plan. Report emissions to The Climate Registry (TCR), which has developed a standardized method for reporting emissions inventories; use ICLEI and TCR's, or their equivalent, tools to track and evaluate progress.

3. Decrease Energy Demand for Local Government Operations
Adopt a goal of reducing electricity use by a reasonable level from projected levels on a timeline that can be achieved as recommended by the Commissioner of the Division of Public Works:

   A. **Existing Public Facilities.** Inventory current building electricity usage and identify cost effective opportunities for conservation and efficiency retrofits. Obtain energy assessments from the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA), the New York Power Authority, the Long Island Power Authority or other professionals. Consider actions such as purchasing energy efficient equipment and appliances, such as ENERGY STAR®; improving lighting, heating, and cooling efficiency; setting thermostats for maximum energy conservation; decreasing plug load from office equipment; and increasing pump efficiency in water and wastewater systems.


   C. **Infrastructure.** Incorporate cost effective energy efficient technologies and operations and maintenance practices into county street lighting, traffic signals, and water and wastewater treatment facilities.

   D. **Vehicle Fleet and Commuting.** Improve the average fuel efficiency of county government fleet vehicles. Discourage vehicle idling and encourage car-pooling for employees. Consider converting fleet vehicles to sustainable alternative fuels; and using electric vehicles where practicable.

4. Encourage Renewable Energy for County Government Operations
Supply as much of the local government's power, heat and hot water needs as practicable from solar, wind, and small hydro through purchase or direct generation, where cost effective.

5. Realize Benefits of Recycling and Other Climate Smart Solid Waste Management Practices
Expand the "reduce, reuse and recycle" approach to waste management in county government operations and in the whole community. Reduce the amount of solid waste generated -- promote backyard composting, and educate residents on how to prevent waste. Promote reuse or trade of reusable goods. Implement programs such as requiring duplex printing in government offices, compost food scraps and green waste, and adopt a comprehensive green purchasing program, as practicable.

6. Promote Climate Protection through Community Land Use Planning
Combat climate change by encouraging low-emissions development that is resilient to climatic changes. When assisting the Towns and Villages of Sullivan County: updating land use policies, building codes or community plans, encourage provisions to combat climate change; reduce sprawl; preserve and protect open space, biodiversity, and water supplies; promote compact, transit-oriented, bikeable and walkable communities; promote infill development; minimize new development in floodplains; maintain or establish healthy community forests; and promote best forest management practices and encourage tree planting, especially along waterways, to increase shading and to absorb carbon dioxide. The County acknowledges that land use planning and zoning regulations are a matter of local authority reserved to the respective Towns and Villages of the County.

7. Plan for Adaptation to Potential Climate Change
Evaluate risks from potential climate change, set adaptation goals and plan for adaptation. Identify potential climate change impacts (such as flooding, drought, and extreme temperatures) that could affect the community. Factor risks into long-term investments and decision-making. Execute climate change adaptation and preparedness measures through county government planning, development and operations, giving priority to the highest risk areas.

8. Support a Green Innovation Economy
Identify opportunities to incorporate climate protection, sustainability and environmental goods and service industries into economic development plans. Encourage workforce development training and school curricula that support the emerging green collar job sector, including renewable energy and energy efficiency, as well as climate smart solid waste management practices. Procure climate smart goods and services for local government, as may be permitted and in compliance with all applicable laws and policies, including but not limited to the County’s Procurement Policy.

9. Inform and Inspire the Public
Lead by example. Highlight county government commitment to reducing energy use, saving tax dollars, and adapting to changing conditions. Demonstrate the benefits of energy savings, energy efficiency, and renewable energy projects by hosting open houses; holding local meetings; working with school districts, colleges, and universities to develop climate change curricula and programs; and regularly communicating community climate protection goals and progress to constituents.

10. Commit to an Evolving Process
Acknowledge that research and policy on climate protection are constantly improving and evolving. Be willing to consider new ideas and commit to update plans and policies as needed.
Compare successes, cooperate and collaborate with neighboring communities to redirect less-effective actions and amplify positive results, and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Sustainability Policy Committee of the Legislature shall report at least annually on the progress made related to a Climate Smart Communities Pledge, and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the County Manager shall assist the Sustainability Policy Committee with the development of the progress reports, by assigning appropriate county staff to work on the above goals, along with incorporating progress on these goals in the contract with Sullivan Alliance for Sustainable Development, or such other organization under contract with the County to provide similar services from time to time.

*Moved by Mrs. LaBuda, seconded by Mrs. Goodman, put to a vote with Mr. Armstrong and Mr. Sorensen absent, unanimously carried and declared duly adopted on motion February 11, 2010.*