

FAILED PASSED



Resolution SS1617-10

November 2, 2016

SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

- ALLISON YOUNG, SENATOR OF LEWIS HALL  
ASHTIN BALLARD, SENATOR OF HOWARD HALL  
BRADY McLAUGHLIN, SENATOR OF MORRISSEY MANOR  
BRITTANY BENNINGER, SENATOR OF CAVANAUGH HALL  
ERICA BOSSO, SENATOR OF LYONS HALL  
MATTHEW DONOHUE, SENATOR OF DUNNE HALL  
PAULINA EBERTS, PRESIDENT OF THE CLUB COORDINATION COUNCIL  
SAMANTHA BERLEY, SENATOR OF PASQUERILLA EAST  
ZACHARY HUBER, SENATOR OF DUNCAN HALL

**A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING A REVISION OF THE COMPREHENSIVE  
SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY**

*Whereas*, the University of Notre Dame is a Catholic university committed to remaining vital and strong for successive generations and, therefore, has a duty to preserve our resources for the well-being of future generations;

*Whereas*, the second encyclical of Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'*, calls for an "appeal [...] for a new dialogue about how we are shaping the future of our planet" (paragraph 14);

*Whereas*, the University has sought to advance sustainability on campus but recognizes it must do more and has established a Committee to create a Comprehensive Sustainability Strategy to advance responsible usage of our natural resources, ensure the availability of these resources for future generations, and equate respectful stewardship of the environment with the faithful care of God's creation;

*Whereas*, the Committee's recommendations are part of a "living" document that is to be reconsidered when it is deemed that the goals are not ambitious enough;

*Whereas*, the University's renewable energy strategy calls for just 25 percent of our power to be from renewable sources by 2050. Two nearby schools with similar climates and power generation schemes, the University of Michigan and Michigan State University, have adopted goals of carbon neutrality and 100% renewable energy, respectively, by 2050;

*Whereas*, the report offers no statement on the over \$400 million Notre Dame currently invests in fossil fuel companies, funding the extraction of more carbon from the earth than we can safely burn. Investing in fossil fuel companies is no longer environmentally nor fiscally

sustainable if we are going to avoid the increase of 1.5 degrees Celsius from pre-industrial temperatures tipping point set by the Paris Climate Agreement;

*Whereas*, the campus power plant would still use non-renewable energy — natural gas — under the plan. In setting its goals for emissions per square foot, it allows Notre Dame's overall carbon footprint to grow as campus expands;

*Whereas*, the Student Senate is comprised of elected and appointed leaders of the Student Body and is particularly responsible for promoting the current and future well-being of the students of Notre Dame and the forward-looking priorities of the University; therefore, be it,

*Resolved*, that the Student Senate supports a revision of the University of Notre Dame Comprehensive Sustainability Strategy to ensure that the outlined goals reflect our duty as a Catholic institution by committing to a higher reliance on renewable energy than currently stated, publicly considering divestment, and reducing the current and future use of natural gas; and,

*Further resolved*, that the Student Senate recommends further student involvement in these decisions.

