DATE: June 29, 2021

FROM: Eric J. Barron

TO: Bonj Szczgiel, Chair, University Faculty Senate

I have reviewed the Advisory and Consultative report *Climate Action Task Force*, which was passed by the University Faculty Senate at its September 15, 2020 meeting. I concur with the recommendations of the report, which include suggestions regarding the formation of a task force on climate action to explore a range of approaches to reduce Penn State’s carbon emissions.

In response to this Advisory & Consultative report, I have created the Carbon Emissions Reduction Task Force (CERTF). Rob Cooper, Director for Energy and The Environment and Timothy White, Research Professor at Earth and Environmental Systems Institute and Sustainability Officer for the College of Earth and Mineral Sciences have agreed to chair the task force. The committee includes faculty, staff, and students. I would like to appoint a member of the University Faculty Senate’s University Planning committee to the CERTF and I would welcome your suggestion of who would be most appropriate.

The committee was charged on June 10, 2021. Below please find an outline of the charge.

1. Review the organizational and operational boundary, scopes and sectors currently included in the current Penn State inventory, identify appropriate changes or additions needed to determine the specific set of operations and activities to be included in the goal.
2. Review Penn State’s progress to date in GHG emissions reduction, catalog the interventions made, and assess their relative impacts.
3. Assess potential for expanded strategic deployment of existing approaches to further reduce emissions i.e., how do we maximize existing approaches.
4. Reconsider Penn State’s GHG emissions goal with a view to setting a more aggressive yet attainable target or set of targets (e.g., zero, or negative) as well as a revised time frame in which this might be reasonably achieved.
5. Identify specific strategies focused on reduction of GHGs in our electric, thermal, and commuter portfolios, as well as other areas or opportunities where we can achieve carbon neutrality.
6. Identify emerging technologies that might be deployed to achieve these revised targets and provide specific recommendations to include an assessment of both risks and opportunities.

7. Assess investments required to deploy such approaches and develop elements of a business model that would enable their realization in a long-term, strategic, cost-efficient manner.

The CERTF has been tasked with providing me with their report and recommendations by December 1, 2021.

I appreciate the University Faculty Senate’s effort in developing this report.

cc: Kathleen J. Bieschke
    Dawn Blasko
    Nicholas P. Jones
October 30, 2020

Eric Barron, President
201 Old Main
University Park, PA  16802

Dear President Barron:

The University Faculty Senate, at its September 15, 2020 meeting passed the following Advisory/Consultative report:

**Climate Action Task Force Recommendation**

Attached to this letter are the report from the *Senate Agenda* and the comments from the *Senate Record*. We forward this for your approval and implementation.

Sincerely,

Beth Seymour, Chair
University Faculty Senate

ENCLOSURE
Introduction and Rationale

On April 28, 2020, the University Faculty Senate endorsed a resolution on climate action. This recommendation is made to encourage the implementation, in coordination with University administrative leadership, of items identified for action in the resolution.

Recommendation

In coordination with the Senate, University administrative leadership should form a task force on climate action, consisting of staff and faculty who have expertise in sustainability and mitigating operational production of carbon emissions, as well as staff tasked with overseeing the operational and capital improvements of Penn State, and at least one member of the University Faculty Senate’s Committee on University Planning. This task force should be charged with exploring a range of approaches to reduce Penn State’s carbon emissions to reach, at minimum, the goals set forth in the University Faculty Senate Climate Resolution. The expectation is that the task force will present a specific plan for achieving these goals to University administrative leadership within a year, if possible, and with follow-up reports as appropriate. The plan should include a cost and impact analysis and approaches for broadly engaging students, employees, and, where appropriate, the broader Penn State community.
- Alok Sinha
- William Sitzabee
- Charles Specht
- Gary Thomas
- Mary Vollero
- Alex Wu
- Robert Zambanini
Chair Seymour: Moving to the next report, Senate committee on University Planning, Climate Action Task Force recommendation, Appendix H. This report is brought to the floor by committee and needs no second. Committee Vice Chair Frank Marko will present the report. Frank, the floor is yours.

Frantisek Marko, Penn State Hazelton: Good afternoon. I'd like to introduce the report. On April 28, the University Faculty Senate adopted a climate action resolution that calls for developing a University wide climate action adaptation plan. It also included entering long term range targets with respect to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

This advisory and consultative report presented by University Planning is a logical continuation of this process. We ask the administration to form a task force on climate action, with representation from faculty experts and Senate to explore a wide range of approaches to reach the goals described in the previous resolution. We also ask to present a specific plan within one year.

Chair Seymour: Thank you, Frank. Are there any questions for Frank? You have two ways to ask questions. One is to raise your hand and take the floor, the other is to ask questions in Q&A. Seeing no questions, are we ready to take a vote? OK.

If you're going to vote from Poll Everywhere, to accept the motion press A, to reject press B. And just a reminder, it's from University Planning, Climate Action Task Force recommendations. In the room, to accept raise your hand. To reject, raise your hand.

Thank you, Frank. I appreciate everybody's help working through the voting. I know it can be a bit tedious. Anna is going to spend her time now getting it together for us.

Dawn Blasko, Executive Director Senate Office: The vote on the Climate Action Task Force Recommendation was 140 ACCEPT and 5 REJECT, so it passes.