



Metropolitan Nashville and Davidson County, TN

Legislation Text

File #: RS2021-891, **Version:** 1

A Resolution to commemorate the 51st anniversary of Earth Day, and to recognize April 24, 2021 as Earth Day in Nashville and Davidson County.

WHEREAS, on April 22, 1970, 20 million Americans (10% of the U.S. population at the time) participated in the first Earth Day to protest environmental destruction, marking the beginning of the modern environmental movement; and

WHEREAS, the first Earth Day was inspired by Rachel Carson's groundbreaking book, *Silent Spring*, which documents adverse environmental impacts caused by chemical pesticides, the first color photos of Earth from space, and environmental disasters, including fires in the Cuyahoga River and an oil spill in Santa Barbara; and

WHEREAS United States Senator Gaylord Nelson envisioned the first Earth Day as a nationwide teach-in to educate the public and elected officials about our role in protecting the environment; and

WHEREAS, Earth Day led to the passage of landmark environmental laws in the United States, including the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, and the Endangered Species Act; and

WHEREAS, Earth Day is a time to reflect on the impact humans have on Earth, how we affect to the global environment and climate, and how that, in turn, affects our own health and well-being; and

WHEREAS, April 22, 2021 marks the 51st anniversary of Earth Day in the United States. This year's theme is "Restore Our Earth" and focuses on natural processes, emerging green technologies, and innovative thinking that can restore the world's ecosystems; and

WHEREAS, in furtherance of this goal, five Earth Day campaigns have been instituted to motivate one billion people in 192 countries who now participate in Earth Day activities each year; and

WHEREAS, Earth Day is an occasion to clean up local parks, green spaces, and waterways and to address everyday actions that contribute to climate change and environmental harm; and

WHEREAS, Earth Day is an opportunity for our residents to take action in their homes and neighborhoods to improve the environment and climate in Davidson County and beyond; and

WHEREAS, Earth Day is more relevant now than ever as we confront the rise in global temperature, catastrophic weather events, rising sea levels, and longer and more devastating tornado, derecho, and heavy rain seasons; and

WHEREAS, Nashville and Davidson County is vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change, including increased tornado frequency and intensity, flooding, and creek and river level rise due to the city's location along the Cumberland River; and

WHEREAS, Nashville and Davidson County is home to many local organizations dedicated to ensuring that the city has a healthy environment for its residents, native plants, and wildlife, including the Cumberland River Compact, Nashville Tree Foundation, Nature Conservancy, Root Nashville, Sierra Club, Southern Environmental Law Center, Tennessee Bureau of Parks & Conservation; Tennessee Environmental Council,

the TennGreen Land Conservancy, Tennessee Wildlife Federation, Tennessee Women in Green (TWIG), Urban Green Lab, and many others; and

WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Council has enacted legislation to establish a Metro fleet schedule for low- or zero-emissions vehicles (BL2019-1598), create green building standards and amend sustainable building design standards for new and renovated Metropolitan Government buildings and facilities (BL2019-1599), establish a renewable energy standard for the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County (BL2019-1600), require street trees in the grass strip beside new sidewalks (BL2020-288), implemented substantial updates to Metro's building codes and energy standards, which significantly improve energy efficiency while reducing the environmental impact of building design and construction (BL2020-458), support of Metro Nashville Public Schools' full implementation of sustainable practices throughout the school district and a Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights (RS2020-695), introduction of large-scale photovoltaic solar facilities (BL2021-613), and amend laws on the design and operation of outdoor electrical lighting to achieve light pollution reduction consistent with International Dark Sky Association guidelines (BL2020-535); and

WHEREAS, Mayor John Cooper worked with in partnership with Vanderbilt, TVA, and NES to create the Green Invest Agreement to generate 1/3 of Metro's energy needs through renewable sources, worked closely with Metro Council to adopt this legislation (RS2020-441), and put Nashville on the list of "Top 10 Most Noteworthy City Renewables Deals of 2020" by the American Cities Climate Challenge; and

WHEREAS, Mayor John Cooper formed a Sustainability Advisory Committee in 2020, appointed a sustainable energy expert to the NES Electric Power Board, established an Energy Savings Revolving fund, and became signatory to the Global Covenant of Mayors; and

WHEREAS, on Saturday, April 24, 2021, from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., Nashville will celebrate Earth Day in a socially distanced format at an event presented by Centennial Park Conservancy, Nashville Parks Foundation, Metro Public Works, and Metro Parks at Centennial Park. This free family event brings the Nashville community together to celebrate our planet, inspire positive environmental change, and support sustainable small businesses & nonprofits.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY:

Section 1. The Metropolitan County Council hereby goes on record commemorating the 51st anniversary of Earth Day on April 22, 2021.

Section 2. The Metropolitan County Council further goes on record as recognizing April 24, 2021 as Earth Day in Nashville and Davidson County.

Section 3. This Resolution shall take effect from and after its adoption, the welfare of the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County requiring it.