

## RESOLUTION PROMOTING THE PUBLIC HEALTH ROLE IN CLIMATE CHANGE

**WHEREAS**, the science on climate change indicates that significant changes in environmental conditions could have serious impacts on the public's health, including but not limited to, illness and death from excessive heat, injury and death from extreme weather events, increased respiratory and cardiovascular diseases due to air pollution, and increased vector-borne and water-borne diseases from changes in temperature and precipitation; and

**WHEREAS**, climate change is an issue of tremendous importance to the health and safety of individuals and communities because it influences how we live and breathe, as well as the availability and safety of food and water; and

**WHEREAS**, greenhouse gases are major contributors to climate change and carbon dioxide is the major component of greenhouse gases that are discharged from the burning of fossil fuels such as coal and gasoline; and

**WHEREAS**, awareness and education on how behavior and decision making may contribute to climate change are critical and public health has a responsibility to help people understand how their transportation choices, their use of water and electricity, the types and amounts of goods purchased and consumed affect their health and the environment (<http://www.apha.org/programs/environment/>); and

**WHEREAS**, there is a vital need to improve public health capacity to identify, prevent, plan and respond to climate-related threats (e.g. extreme weather events, changing patterns of communicable disease) and to integrate climate change into preparedness plans, (<http://www.astho.org/pubs/climatechange08.pdf>); and

**WHEREAS**, it will take change at all levels of governments and in all sectors of society to plan for more sustainable communities and to address the causes and effects of climate change.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the South Carolina Public Health Association supports recommendations put forward by leading public health organizations such as the American Public Health Association and the Association of State and Territorial Health Officers to conduct community assessments, build on existing prevention and control programs, adopt public policies that increase energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy, decrease greenhouse gas emissions, and make additional investments in our public health system to help prevent and respond to the health impacts associated with climate change.

Approved this 20th day of May, 2009

*Katy L. Wynne, EdD, MSW*

Katy L. Wynne, President  
South Carolina Public Health Association

