

RESOLUTION TO INITIATE SAN FRANCISCO DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT'S WORK WITH THE PORT OF SAN FRANCISCO TO CREATE A POLICY TO PROHIBIT THE TRANSPORTATION AND EXPORT OF HAZARDOUS FOSSIL FUEL MATERIALS SUCH AS CRUDE OIL, COAL, AND PETROLEUM COKE IN THE CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

WHEREAS there is a new push by the fossil fuel industry to transport, export, and/or refine coal, crude oil and petroleum coke (“petcoke”)—a byproduct of oil refining—on the West Coast and in California; and

WHEREAS the industrial use of these hazardous fossil fuel materials is a significant source of greenhouse gas emissions and a major contributor to climate change, pollution, and environmental injustice in our communities; and

WHEREAS coal and petcoke are commonly transported via open-top rail cars and a large volume of those materials escape during transit exposing communities to toxic heavy metals such as mercury, arsenic, lead, copper, mercury, zinc, and nickel at levels that are harmful to community members, workers, wildlife, and nature; and

WHEREAS the volume of crude by rail shipments has increased dramatically throughout the country and in Northern California in particular (57 percent increase during 2013 alone), and this dramatic rise has been accompanied by a similar rise in spectacular accidents, nearly 100 in 2013 totaling 1.15 million gallons of spilled crude which is more oil than has spilled from rail cars in the past 4 decades; and,

WHEREAS the transportation of these hazardous fossil fuel materials will lead to an increase in diesel emissions in communities along rail lines and transportation corridors, including exposure to particulate matter from diesel engines that has been linked to serious health hazards, asthma, heart attacks, and cancer; and

WHEREAS there is currently a renewed interest among the fossil fuel industry to uplift a longstanding federal ban on the export of crude oil; and

WHEREAS the staff at the Port of San Francisco have demonstrated environmental leadership by consistently rejecting proposals from companies seeking to transport or export coal on or through Port of San Francisco property or terminals; and

WHEREAS a formal policy to prohibit the transportation and export of these hazardous fossil fuel materials in the City and County of San Francisco would enable San Francisco to join West Coast cities and ports such as the Port of Oakland in helping to bottle up the nation’s coal supplies and keep them in the ground where they can do the climate, the environment, and communities no harm; and

WHEREAS such a policy would also support efforts in Bay Area cities and states such as Michigan to stop the use of petcoke, which emits 30-80% more carbon dioxide than coal, as a coal alternative; now, therefore, be it,

RESOLVED that the San Francisco Commission on the Environment Policy Committee hereby authorizes the Department of the Environment to work with staff at the Port of San Francisco, environmental and community advocates, and stakeholders to develop a policy prohibiting the transportation and export of coal, crude oil, and petroleum coke on Port property for consideration by the San Francisco Port Commission; and, be it,

FURTHER RESOLVED that the Commission on the Environment requests that Department of Environment staff work with the Commission to craft a citywide policy regarding the transportation and export of these materials following the Port Commission's adoption of a policy regarding these activities on Port property.

Sponsor: Commissioner Joshua Arce