

November 13, 2015

Ms. Angela Barranco
Office of Public Engagement
White House Council on Environmental Quality

Dear Ms. Barranco:

As institutions of higher education, we applaud the monumental progress already made to promote clean energy and climate action as we seek a comprehensive, ambitious agreement at the upcoming United Nations Climate Negotiations in Paris. Although we are optimistic that world leaders will reach an agreement to secure a transition to a low-carbon future, we recognize the urgent need to act now to avoid irreversible costs to our global community's economic prosperity and public health. Today our school pledges to accelerate the transition to low-carbon energy while enhancing sustainable and resilient practices across our campuses.

Additionally, Appalachian State University puts forth our pledge as follows:

As boldly stated in our University's strategic plan, *The Appalachian Experience: Envisioning a Just and Sustainable Future*, we are "inspired by the ideal of sustainable community" and support our students in becoming "engaged global citizens." Further, as a university, we are committed to being "an influential world citizen," thus this pledge is consistent with the values and ethos of our campus community. Our rich tradition and decades-long commitment to sustainability is evidenced by our many efforts and accomplishments which include:

- The four-year college recipient of the 2015 Second Nature/USGBC Climate Leadership Award.
- A top-three ranking in higher education's broad-based [AASHE STARS](#) sustainability tracking platform.
- Documented high percentages of classes offered and faculty research that self-identify as sustainability focused or related.
- Annual host of the Appalachian Energy Summit, an education and collaboration centered initiative that in its fifth year is on track to support \$2 billion in avoided energy costs for the University of North Carolina system.

In further support of the 2015 White House Climate Day of Action, Appalachian makes and/or confirms the following action-oriented commitments to:

- Become a Charter Signatory in Second Nature's new Climate, Carbon and Resiliency commitment pledge.

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- Build upon our recognized educational efforts, including on-campus curriculum opportunities, and the Appalachian Energy Summit, which serves the University of North Carolina system.
- Expand our on-campus utilization of renewable energy resources, targeting 4MW of on-campus green energy.
- Broaden our sustainable transportation portfolio to represent car sharing, ride sharing, bicycling program, electric vehicle infrastructure, no-fare public transportation, and bio-fuels usage.
- Continue our noted and aggressive efforts to reduce on-campus energy and water usage.
- Increase adoption in on-campus carbon offset markets, including our innovative Carbon Neutral Commuting program.
- Intensify our efforts to achieve our goal of "Zero Waste" by the year 2022.
- Address the social justice and adaptation related issues of climate change by exploring resiliency strategies.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Sheri N. Everts in black ink.

Sheri N. Everts
Chancellor