

JACKSONVILLE WATERWAYS COMMISSION

A RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE CITY OF JACKSONVILLE WATERWAYS COMMISSION'S SUPPORT FOR ACTIONS TO STOP THE SHIPPING OF COAL ASH ON THE ST. JOHNS RIVER AND INTO JACKSONVILLE PORTS AND ENCOURAGING ALL JACKSONVILLE PORT FACILITIES TO CEASE RECEIVING OR REFUSE THE ACCEPTANCE OF COAL ASH.

WHEREAS, the St. Johns River, Jacksonville beaches, and surrounding waterways are critical to the quality of life and economic vitality of Northeast Florida; and

WHEREAS, the Jacksonville Waterways Commission is committed to the protection of Jacksonville waterways and the citizens of Jacksonville; and

WHEREAS, the recent barge accident off the coast of Jacksonville that resulted in the release of thousands of tons of imported coal ash into the ocean resulted in environmental and human health risk imposed upon Jacksonville communities by this disposal practice; and

WHEREAS, coal ash is a waste product from the burning of coal in coal-fired power plants that contains toxic contaminants like mercury, cadmium, lead, selenium, and arsenic; and

WHEREAS, the United States Environmental Protection Agency indicates that, "[w]ithout proper management, these contaminants can pollute waterways, ground water, drinking water, and the air"; and

WHEREAS, the Puerto Rico legislature passed laws in 2017 banning the disposal of coal ash in its landfills due to serious health concerns, forcing the AES power plant to ship its coal ash to an Osceola County landfill; and

WHEREAS, the Osceola Board of County Commissioners voted on May 13, 2019, to request that Waste Connections of Osceola County, LLC

1 cease receiving coal ash from Puerto Rico at the JED Landfill in
2 Osceola County; and

3 **WHEREAS**, the actions of the Osceola Board of County
4 Commissioners resulted in coal ash being shipped on the St. Johns
5 River into Jacksonville's port en route to a landfill in Folkston,
6 Georgia; and

7 **WHEREAS**, as evidenced by the recent spill, this imported waste
8 puts the health, of the St. Johns River and Jacksonville beaches at
9 risk; and

10 **WHEREAS**, coal ash spills in Jacksonville waterways can cause
11 substantial harm to the local economy and the financial viability of
12 businesses that rely on tourism and clean, safe waterways; now
13 therefore

14 **BE IT RESOLVED** by the Waterways Commission of the City of
15 Jacksonville:

16 **Section 1. FINDINGS.** The Waterways Commission finds
17 the foregoing to be true and accurate.

18 **Section 2. RECOMMENDATION.** The City of Jacksonville
19 Waterways Commission hereby expresses its support for actions to stop
20 the shipping of coal ash on the St. Johns River and into Jacksonville
21 ports and strongly encourages all Jacksonville port facilities, both
22 public and private, to either cease receiving or refuse the acceptance
23 of coal ash due to the potential harmful impacts to human health, and
24 local waterways and beaches.

25 **DONE AND ORDERED** at the _____, 2021 meeting of the
26 Jacksonville Waterways Commission.

27
28 _____
29 Albert Ferraro, Chairman, Jacksonville Waterways Commission
30 City Council Member, District 2