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## College Presidents Up Ante on Climate Change: 270 Sign Pledge to Take Campuses Carbon Neutral

*Higher Education leaders Sign Dramatic Pledge to Fight Global Warming*

WASHINGTON, DC – At a summit of higher education leaders, presidents from America’s leading colleges and universities today adopted a major new commitment to combat global warming, including a direct pledge to take immediate action and – in an unprecedented move – to set a goal of going climate neutral.

Hundreds of presidents have signed the American College & University Presidents Climate Commitment, the first effort by *any* major sector of society to set a long-term goal to completely eliminate global warming emissions. In addition, the presidents have pledged a renewed dedication to the critical research and education needed to end global warming.

“Global warming is a defining challenge of our time,” said Michael Crow, President of Arizona State University and Chair of the Commitment’s Steering Committee. “Human activities are responsible for the problem, and working together humans have the capacity to solve the problem. Colleges and universities must lead the effort to reverse global warming for the health and well-being of current and future generations.

**Over 270 schools have signed on, representing over 2 million students, or 1 out of every 8 individuals attending higher education.** It represents over a quarter of the top national universities, a quarter of the top liberal arts colleges, and a third of the top public universities, as defined by U.S. News and World Report. It includes elite Ivy League universities, major state schools, and community colleges. It represents the largest such campaign by university presidents since World War II – and the commitment only started circulating earlier this year.

The presidents will create a comprehensive institutional action plan to move towards climate neutrality. In the short term, **each President is committing to immediately taking two or more of the following concrete actions:**

- Adopting green standards for buildings;
- Requiring ENERGY STAR certification for products purchased by the university;
- Offsetting emissions due to air travel;
- Encouraging public transportation;
- Purchasing energy from renewable sources; and
- Supporting climate and sustainability shareholder proposals through their endowment.

This undertaking by America’s colleges and universities is inspired by efforts like the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement, the U.S. Climate Action Partnership and other collective efforts by states and businesses. Under the guidance and direction of university presidents, the Commitment is being supported and implemented by the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE), Second Nature, and ecoAmerica.

More information is available at [www.presidentsclimatecommitment.org](http://www.presidentsclimatecommitment.org).

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