



The Emory Climate Coalition Press Release: October 13, 2021

Meeting with President Fenves and Associate Vice President Howett

On Wednesday, October 13, 2021, student leaders of the Emory Climate Coalition met with Gregory L. Fenves, President of Emory University, and Ciannat Howett, Associate Vice President of Sustainability, Resilience and Economic Inclusion. The Emory Climate Coalition shared a presentation of its research on Emory University's current climate commitments and articulated its demand for greater University action to address the global climate emergency.

The demands were framed around three broad themes: urgency, accountability, and transparency. More specifically, the Coalition called for Emory to join the [Race to Zero](#) and the [Climate Leadership Network](#). In order to fulfill its obligations to these networks, the Coalition also called for the University to commit more financial and institutional resources to achieve these goals. These resources would in part be used to leverage greater influence on the Georgia Public Service Commission to more rapidly decarbonize Georgia Power's electricity generation.

Following a productive and collaborative meeting, President Fenves signed the [Race to Zero](#) and joined the [Climate Leadership Network](#) (CLN) on behalf of Emory University. President Fenves also expressed a desire to continue working on these issues in collaboration with student leaders, faculty, and staff with a particular emphasis on climate justice and resilience in Atlanta.

The Race to Zero is a coalition of net-zero emissions initiatives including countries, companies, universities, and other entities that is designed to rally climate leadership and accelerate the global transition to net zero leading up to the 26th Conference of Parties (COP26) in November 2021. In its presentation, the Emory Climate Coalition urged President Fenves to commit to a net-zero emissions goal earlier than Emory's current goal of 2050. A more aggressive goal will align with a majority of Race to Zero universities who have more ambitious targets, including many of Emory's peer institutions in the United States. This shift will allow Emory to demonstrate its global climate leadership.

The Climate Leadership Network is a nationwide system of about 450 higher education institutions whose presidents have formally committed to climate action. President Fenves signed the CLN's [Climate Commitment](#), which combines urgent action toward reducing emissions with efforts to build climate resilience. CLN membership requires the University to complete annual evaluations of progress towards its commitment and maintain an up-to-date Climate Action Plan.

"After a year of research, organizing, and grassroots student mobilization, we were thrilled to present our climate action campaign to President Fenves and Associate Vice President Howett," said the Emory Climate Coalition leadership. "We are grateful for the President and Associate Vice President's support of these urgent priorities. We know that today is just the beginning, and we look forward to ongoing collaboration with the University Administration. We are eager to see more urgency as Emory updates its Climate Action Plan and commits greater institutional resources, staff, and political pressure to achieving rapid emissions reduction."