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**PRESS RELEASE
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Leading Iowa scientists say it has never been easier to address climate change

(Des Moines) 186 Climate scientists from 32 Iowa colleges and universities released a statement today identifying ways people can think about reducing their impact on climate change. Since 2011, Iowa researchers and educators have produced annual statements describing impacts Iowans are experiencing from climate change and how Iowa can both address and adapt to the changes we are seeing.

“2023 was the hottest year since global temperature measurements began, and after another record-breaking summer, 2024 is on track to be even hotter. We are on a climate path where unprecedented extremes should be expected.” said Gene Takle, Distinguished Professor Emeritus in Agronomy at Iowa State University.

“Rapid action is critical if we want to reduce damages,” said Bill Gutowski, Professor Emeritus of Meteorology at Iowa State University, “but we have the tools and technologies right now that we need to take that action.”

Peter Thorne, Distinguished Chair of the Department of Occupational & Environmental Health at the University of Iowa said “Collective action in the form of policy changes that reduce greenhouse gas emissions is necessary to address the crisis, but individual actions can help as well. Not only do they allow us to reduce our own footprint, but they help to dispel the feeling of powerlessness that many of us feel over the challenge.”

Emma Stapleton, Research Assistant Professor in the Department of Internal Medicine at the University of Iowa identified several types of actions that people could take. “Research shows that addressing issues that cause anxiety, like climate, comes with many rewards, especially when efforts are made as part of a community. Working with community members to identify and take on achievable goals inspires others and multiplies our impact. Supporting local, place-based actions is less overwhelming than efforts at the national and international level. And many actions that support climate, like biking or walking instead of driving, also produce physical and mental health benefits.”

“There has never been an easier time to act to reduce your impact,” said David Courard-Hauri, Professor of Environmental Science and Sustainability at Drake University. “Legislation like the Inflation Reduction Act has provided money and tax incentives for a whole array of energy-saving upgrades to your home. With this and technological improvements, things like electric

vehicles, solar power systems, efficient appliances, and weatherization are less expensive than they have ever been.”

David Osterberg, Professor Emeritus of Occupational and Environmental Health at the University of Iowa said “We all work with young people, and we see deep anxiety within those generations about climate change. A survey of 10,000 young people found 84% report being moderately to extremely worried about climate change, with over 60% responding that it makes them feel sad, afraid, and anxious. I talk to students who are afraid to have children, or wonder how they are going to buy a home if they can’t get insurance. They want to know both what they can do themselves, and what we are doing to avoid passing on to them an overheated planet.”

“There is a lot that needs to be done to reduce global emissions and address climate change, but understanding that it really is do-able is the first step. That’s a huge benefit that comes from seeing what changes we can all make in our own lives.”

This year’s statement was signed by 186 researchers and educators.

The 32 Colleges and Universities of statement endorsers:

Central College
Clarke University
Coe College
Cornell College
Des Moines Area Community College
Des Moines University
Dordt College
Drake University
Ellsworth Community College
Graceland University
Grand View University
Grinnell College
Hawkeye Community College
Indian Hills Community College
Iowa Central Community College
Iowa Lakes Community College

Iowa State University
Iowa Western Community College
Kirkwood Community College
Loras College
Luther College
Maharishi University of Management
Mount Mercy University
Northeast Iowa Community College
Simpson College
Southeastern Community College
Southwestern Community College
Saint Ambrose University
University of Dubuque
University of Iowa
University of Northern Iowa
Waldorf College

Endorser affiliations are for identification purposes only and do not reflect views of their academic institutions.

The statement can be found at
www.ehsrc.org/