

March 29, 2023

To the Board of Governors of McMaster University:

We, the undersigned, are lending our support to the inspiring students and faculty that are calling on the administration of McMaster University to take swift and meaningful action to divest from fossil fuels, in accordance with its institutional commitments and in line with climate science. The administration needs to recognize that students should not feel that resorting to a hunger strike is their only option for protecting our collective future.

McMaster professes to be taking the climate crisis and its responsibility to act seriously. You set a net zero by 2050 goal and centralized this in a new [Sustainability Strategy](#). In 2021, the president of the University wrote to the Board of Governors with an [explicit directive](#) to develop a strategy for divestment from fossil fuels, and this directive is reflected in the university's [Strategic Plan](#). Two full years later, the Board has not implemented this directive. As of last year, McMaster held \$30.4 million in assets in the top 200 largest publicly-listed coal, oil, and gas reserves owners in the world, known as the [Carbon Underground 200](#). You have not set a formal, publicly disclosed plan for terminating these investments. It is time to act to divest from fossil fuels.

Further, the university is taking a step backwards on making its campus carbon neutral by building four natural gas-powered generators on environmentally sensitive lands. It is nonsensical to build new fossil fuel powered generation at a time when renewables are less expensive and this project would lock in emissions for years to come.

Taking meaningful steps to address climate change is central to advancing reconciliation and upholding Indigenous rights and self-determination. It is well-established that climate change [disproportionately impacts](#) Indigenous and other marginalized populations around the world, and fossil fuel projects in Canada continue to result in egregious [violations of Indigenous rights and encroachments onto Indigenous lands](#).

More than [1550 institutions around the world](#), including a dozen Canadian universities, and some of the world's largest pension funds, have already divested from fossil fuels, thereby sending a bold message to the fossil fuel industry and demonstrating real dedication to creating a brighter world. They have done so in line with their fiduciary responsibilities, properly assessing the financial risk of staying invested in fossil fuels.

We urge McMaster to step up. It's time to put aside the excuses and join with your students and community who are advocating for divestment and a stop to the build out of new gas powered generation.

Sincerely and in solidarity,

Accelerate Neighborhood Climate Action  
Africa Climate Action Initiative  
Alliance For Just Money  
Association Étudiante d'Anthropologie de l'Université de Montréal  
Athens County's Future Action Network, acfan.org  
Banking on a Better Future  
Banking on a Better Future  
Banking on a Better Future at York University  
Bold Alliance  
Businesses for a Livable Climate  
Call to Action Colorado  
Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment  
Canadian Climate Challenge  
Canadian Voice of Women for Peace  
Cascadia Climate Action Now  
CatholicNetwork US  
Centre for Citizens Conserving Environment & Management (CECIC)  
Citizens' Climate Lobby Canada  
Clean Air Partnership  
Clean Energy Action  
Climate Action for Lifelong Learners (CALL)  
Climate Action Network Canada (CAN-Rac)  
Climate Change Toronto  
Climate Emergency Unit  
Climate Justice Climatique uOttawa  
Climate Justice UBC  
Climate Justice UofT  
Climate Pledge Collective  
ClimateFast  
ClimateMama  
CO Businesses for a Livable Climate  
Coalition for Responsible Energy Development in New Brunswick  
Colorado Democratic Party - Energy & Environmental Initiative  
Community for Sustainable Energy  
Crane Institute for Sustainability  
Decolonial Solidarity

Divest NJ  
Divest Oregon  
Earth Action, Inc.  
Ecojustice  
Ecologos Environmental Organization  
Ecology of the Heart  
Empower Our Future  
Environmental Defence  
Extinction Rebellion Ottawa  
Extinction Rebellion San Francisco Bay Area  
First, Do No Harm  
For Our Kids  
For Our Kids Burnaby  
For Our Kids Montreal  
For Our Kids Toronto  
Fossil Free California  
Fossil Free Lakehead  
FracTracker Alliance  
Fridays For Future Sudbury  
Friends of the Earth Canada  
Grand(m)other's Act to Save the Planet (GASP)  
Greater New Orleans Housing Alliance  
Green 11  
Green 13  
Greenpeace Canada  
Honor the Earth  
I-70 Citizens Advisory Group  
Indivisible Ambassadors  
Just Earth  
Justice Institute Guyana Inc.  
KAIROS Guelph  
Kairos Toronto West  
L'Écothèque  
Larimer Alliance for Health, Safety and Environment  
Littleton Business Alliance  
Mayfair Park Neighborhood Association Board  
Mental Health & Inclusion Ministries  
Mind Eye World  
Montbello Neighborhood Improvement Association  
New Mexico Climate Justice  
No Single Solution (NoSS)  
North Range Concerned Citizens

Oil and Gas Action Network  
Ontario Clean Air Alliance  
Ontario Climate Emergency Campaign  
Plasticfree Toronto  
QuitRBC  
Rainforest Action Network  
RapidShift Network  
Razom We Stand  
Sault Climate Hub  
Save EPA  
Science for Peace  
Seniors for Climate Action Now! (SCAN!)  
SFU350  
Shift Action for Pension Wealth and Planet Health  
Small Business Alliance  
Southwest Organization for Sustainability  
Spirit of the Sun, Inc.  
Stand.earth  
Stop Sprawl HamOnt  
STU Students for Sustainability  
Student Christian Movement of Canada  
System Change Not Climate Change  
The Council of Canadians  
The Global Sunrise Project  
The Green House Connection Center  
The Phoenix Group  
Third Act  
Third Act Educators  
THIS! Is What We Did  
Toronto East End Climate Collective (TEECC)  
Toronto Health Save  
Unite North Metro Denver  
VOW Just Earth  
Wall of Women  
Western Slope Businesses for a Livable Climate  
Windfall Ecology Centre  
Womxn from the Mountain  
Working for Racial Equity  
Youth Climate Save Canada  
350 Canada  
350 Hawaii  
350 NYC