



For Immediate Release
July 30, 2018

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Over 100 Groups Support Continued Investigation of ExxonMobil by NY Attorney General Barbara Underwood

(NY) - More than a hundred environmental, faith, and community groups have signed onto a new letter to New York State Attorney General Barbara Underwood supporting her continued investigation into ExxonMobil. Thus far, the AG's office has been investigating the role fossil fuel companies may have played in misleading the public and investors about the realities of climate change.

The Attorneys General in New York and Massachusetts initiated these investigations nearly three years ago. They have withstood an aggressive campaign by the fossil fuel industry to curtail their efforts -- particularly after the departure of NY's prior Attorney General. Meanwhile climate change has continued to worsen.

For decades, scientists have warned that unless there was a reduction in the use of coal, oil and gas, climate changes would occur and millions would suffer as a result.

"Frontline communities worldwide who have contributed the least to climate change, are suffering the most, for instance the impact in Puerto Rico from Hurricane Maria even six months later. Meanwhile, fossil fuel companies continue to obfuscate and continue to pollute. Even amid increasing industry pressure, we urge Attorney General Underwood to move forward swiftly with her investigation." - **Blair Horner, Executive Director, NYPIRG**

"New York State must continue to lead the way in the fight against climate change. New Yorkers expect Attorney General Underwood to continue the important investigation into whether Exxon Mobil misled its investors on climate change. With utter chaos at the federal level, it's never been clearer that leaders in New York must take up the mantle of climate champions, and we urge Attorney General Underwood to show real leadership now," - **Alex Beauchamp, Northeast Region Director, Food & Water Watch**

"Attorney General Underwood's commitment to continue investigating all that #ExxonKnew and hid about climate change shows fossil fuel companies can't shirk the necessary accountability. While Judge Keenan may have dismissed New York City's lawsuit, he didn't dismiss the reckless actions of these companies. From Sandy-like storms and flooded subways to record heat waves, the costs of Exxon's destruction is being paid for by New Yorkers. While the Trump

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administration props up fossil fuel interests, it's more crucial than ever that AG Underwood and all elected officials hold Big Oil accountable, and stand up for the health and safety of our communities." - **May Boeve, Executive Director, 350.org**

“As Long Islanders, we have a particular interest in learning whether companies like ExxonMobil did in fact attempt to delay decisive action on climate change because such attempts would be extremely harmful and costly to this and other coastal communities. We encourage Attorney General Underwood to continue the investigation of ExxonMobil and other oil and gas industry actors on this important issue.”- **Gordian Raacke, Executive Director, Renewable Energy Long Island**

" Last year we witnessed the extraordinary harm wrought by 3 hurricanes—one after another. The weather impacts -50 inches of rainfall in Houston- were unprecedented, but the devastation of people and communities was even worse. In Puerto Rico over 4000 people died and restoration efforts are underfunded and hopelessly inadequate. The fossil fuel industry is responsible for ongoing lies that resulted in this misery. We look to the efforts of the Attorney General to balance the scales of justice." - **Barbara Warren, Executive Director, Citizens' Environmental Coalition.**

"The WESPAC Community is deeply dismayed that ExxonMobil has attempted to obscure facts to protect its profit maximization. We are at a critical juncture on our planet where millions of lives are at stake in the face of serious climate change. We urge the New York State Attorney General to vigorously investigate ExxonMobil for the sake of transparency, accountability and the public interest."- **Nada Khader, Executive Director, WESPAC Foundation, Inc.**

"Your office's leadership on this matter can help turn the tides of climate change by advocating for those communities most affected by Exxon's actions. Quick public action on this investigation is crucial for the wellbeing of those affected communities, which are predominantly comprised of low-income and minority groups." - **Tara DePorte, Founder and Executive Director, Human Impacts Institute**

"The farmer and gardener members of the Northeast Organic Farming Association of New York (NOFA-NY) are doing our best to take carbon from the air and put it in the soil where it does us some good. We support federal and state policies that encourage the shift to renewable energy as quickly as possible and join in urging the Attorney General to investigate Exxon's murky dealings to postpone urgent action to save our planet." - **Elizabeth Henderson, Northeast Organic Farming Association of New York**

"Mothers are out front on this issue because we have always understood that *no matter what other employment we have, our* primary job is to provide a good and sustainable life for the next generations, so we pay our taxes, fight for community solar and other clean energy, and we are

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happy to do so. We look to leaders of New York state to do what is right and support what works, and clean energy can do that, but Exxon just doesn't want to change and acts as if they have the right not to. Top employees and owners of brazen companies like Exxon can, as employees, *say* they are not guilty of wrongdoing, but they don't see themselves as citizens unless it serves them, as in the case of Citizens United. They fail to understand their responsibilities as citizens of the globe as well as employees in a global market. We applaud the actions of courageous women like Attorney General Healey, Judge Valerie Caproni, and yourself, who are trying to hold Exxon accountable for their calculated lies. By so doing you are serving all citizens by your actions and providing a greater vision for those who will open their eyes. We applaud and thank you and are ready to support further action! " - **Amy Nelson, member, Mothers Out Front in Keene, NY**

"Despite having known for years that the extraction, burning and transport of fossil fuels was responsible for heating the planet, ExxonMobil and other fossil fuel companies continued their business-as-usual model of climate roulette. The Green Sanctuary Committee applauds the New York State Attorney General's lawsuit against ExxonMobil, et al for their egregious actions." - **Gusti Bogok, Chair, Green Sanctuary Committee, CCNY, UU**

"Exxon is the gravity center for ravishing our planet. They need to be held to account now." - **Stephanie Low, President of Stephanie Low Artists Inc.**

"What we need now is continued courage —which you have shown— to see this investigation through. Public awareness is key to any hope of pulling us back from the brink of irreversible climate destruction, and your office can play a vital role in making that a reality." - **Victoria Furio, Convener, Climate Justice**

"Our Attorney General has stood up to the oil and gas industry for years. With a Federal government that is refusing to take action, it's now more important than ever that New York Attorney General Barbara Underwood hold ExxonMobil accountable for its actions in promoting climate change." - **Yvonne Taylor, Gas Free Seneca**

"ExxonMobil and other oil and gas companies are destroying our planet, New York's Attorney General can make sure they don't get away with their actions." - **Joseph Campbell, Seneca Lake Guardian**

"The reason we as a society are forced to bring such suits against the oil conglomerates is that they will never admit liability and have shown dismal willingness to have an honest discussion about their role in causing global climate change. What we need urgently are solutions to the crisis and for the most part, the fossil fuel companies have not stepped up and invested significantly in workable solutions to reduce carbon emissions and renewable energy." - **Margaret Perkins, 350NYC**

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“As we know from exhaustive investigative reporting by Neela Banerjee, Lisa Song and David Hasemyer for Inside Climate News, ExxonMobil’s own scientists knew decades ago of the fossil-fuel industry culpability in exacerbating catastrophic climate change. Yet the corporation deliberately manufactured ‘doubt’ and obscured the truth. This is criminal, in our view, and charges could be brought right now against the company’s leaders and others who colluded in jeopardizing us and every species that shares our planet.” - **Maura Stephens, Cofounder, Coalition to Protect New York**

"Considering the catastrophic effects of climate change which we are already experiencing, it is crucial to hold Exxon Mobil responsible for misleading both its shareholders and the public about the impact of fossil fuels. The Attorney General must continue the investigation already begun." - **Mary Makofske, Steering Committee, Sustainable Warwick**

"Exxon Mobil, like the tobacco companies, knew for years what kind of damage its products were inflicting on the public but said nothing about it. Although its products were more useful than cigarettes, Exxon Mobil took no steps to mitigate the impact of fossil fuel consumption and, instead, deliberately engaged in reckless actions to undermine public support for greenhouse gas regulation. It must be held accountable." - **Peter Bardaglio, Tompkins County Climate Protection Initiative Coordinator**

"Climate change is here - with massive floods, powerful hurricanes and storms, record-breaking heat and more forest fires than I've ever seen. We need the NYS Attorney General's Office to stand firm in support of the little guy who suffers because Exxon-Mobil didn't want to sacrifice its profits. Please continue to press our case despite industry lobbying so that the American people finally know the truth about how Exxon-Mobil betrayed all of us by lobbying for inaction." - **Tina Lieberman, People's Climate Movement - Capital Region**

BY HAND

July 27, 2018

The Honorable Barbara Underwood
Attorney General
Office of the New York State Attorney General
New York State Department of Law
28 Liberty Street
New York, NY

Dear Attorney General Underwood:

The undersigned write to express our support for your continuing work to investigate the oil and gas industry for its apparent misleading statements to regulators, shareholders and the public related to climate change. We are glad to hear that under your leadership your office plans to continue your efforts in this matter.

While we are in no position to have an opinion on the possible violations of law that your office is exploring, we are well aware of the success the fossil-fuel lobby has had blocking proposals to curtail burning of fossil fuels.

Over three years ago, your office launched an investigation into ExxonMobil on whether it misled the public on the impact that climate change could have on the company. Since then, the climate crisis has only gotten worse.

The last four years have been the hottest in recorded history. Warmer ocean and sea water temperatures have made hurricanes worse, as evidenced by the damage done to American citizens in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. At the same time, melting ice and glaciers are contributing to sea level rise, putting coastal communities at risk.

Our planet is heating up and it is primarily the result of carbon pollution from human activities. For decades, scientists have warned that unless there was a reduction in the use of coal, oil and gas, climate changes would occur and millions would suffer as a result. Those most likely to be harmed are people who live in low-income communities — those areas which have been the least responsible for generating the pollutants that trigger global warming.

It is clear that the industrialized world — which is primarily responsible for global warming — must be the leader in tackling this problem. This is both a moral and practical imperative. But instead of leading, public health, environmental protection and climate policies have been blocked by the political power of the oil and gas companies.

As recent investigations have found, the industry leader — ExxonMobil — was well aware of the dangers of global warming and that burning fossil fuels is the key driver in raising global temperatures.

According to corporate documents obtained by the Los Angeles Times, for example, a leading

Exxon researcher told an audience of engineers at a conference in 1991 that greenhouse gases are rising “due to the burning of fossil fuels. Nobody disputes this fact.” The senior Exxon researcher went on to add that there was no doubt those levels would double by the middle of the 21st century.

Yet at the same time, the company was telling its shareholders concerned about climate change that it had studied the science of global warming and concluded it was too murky to warrant action. The company said that its “examination of the issue supports the conclusions that the facts today and the projection of future effects are very unclear.”

Why would a company with rigorous research hide its conclusions and publicly argue the opposite? According to the Los Angeles Times, it was because Exxon feared a growing public consensus would lead to financially burdensome policies.

As the Times explained, top corporate officials proposed “a plan for the ‘Exxon Position’: In order to stop the momentum behind the issue, Exxon should emphasize doubt. Tell the public that more scientific research is needed before regulatory action is taken and emphasize the ‘costs and economics’ of restricting carbon dioxide emissions.”

ExxonMobil succeeded at manufacturing doubt. So much so that some elected officials still proclaim that global warming is a hoax.

ExxonMobil argues that its internal science led corporate officials to make statements that at the time they believed were the truth. In addition to finding out the facts on whether ExxonMobil was involved in a massive effort to mislead investors, your investigation may well shed light on the veracity of that statement.

We have lost valuable time in the battle against a rapidly heating planet due to the tactics of ExxonMobil and others who work to obscure the facts accepted by 97% of climate scientists and 195 nations. As a result, millions worldwide are suffering and will continue to suffer.

Setting the record straight about what ExxonMobil knew and when it knew it is important to moving forward decisively on climate change. According to internal documents disclosed by the Los Angeles Times and other outlets, Exxon fully understood that denying climate science was influencing not only investors and members of the general public, but the lawmakers and regulators who had the power and responsibility to craft policies to clamp down on climate pollution.

The world cannot ignore this rising threat. As one of the world’s leading contributors to global warming, the United States must take the lead in curbing the damage that is due to come. And it must do so by following the advice of the world’s leading scientists: leave fossil fuels in the ground and rely on safe, renewable energy sources.

Through your office’s investigation, New York can play a leading role by setting the record straight on corporate accountability as well as on climate change with respect to the conduct of one of the world’s largest energy companies.

Therefore, the undersigned groups support your continued investigation and your examination of the corporate actions of ExxonMobil and other industry actors. Time is of the essence. We thank you and your staff for your important work to date.

Sincerely,

350.org

350Brooklyn

350NJ-Rockland

350NYC

Adirondack Mothers Out Front

Advocates for Cherry Valley

All Our Energy

Big Reuse

Bronx Climate Justice North

Buddhist Climate Action Network

Cafeteria Culture

Campaign for Renewable Energy

Catskill Mountainkeeper

Central Park West CSA

Church Women United in New York State

Citizen Action of New York

Citizens Energy and Economics Council of Delaware County, NY
(CEEC)

Citizens for Local Power

Citizens For Water

Citizens' Environmental Coalition

Clean and Healthy New York

Climate Justice

Coalition to Protect New York

Concerned Citizens of Otego NY

Concerned Residents of Oxford

Damascus Citizens for Sustainability

Deep Green Resistance New York

Dryden Resource Awareness Coalition

Elders Climate Action

Empire State Consumer Project

Environmental Justice Task Force of the WNY Peace Center

Food & Water Watch

Fossil Free Tompkins

Franciscan Sisters of the Atonement

Franklin Behavioral Health Consultants

Gas Free Seneca

Gray Panthers

Greater New York Labor-Religion Coalition

Green Education and Legal Fund

New York City

Brooklyn

Nanuet

New York City

Keene Valley

Cherry Valley

Point Lookout

Brooklyn

Bronx

New York

New York

Ithaca

Livingston Manor

New York

Rochester

Albany

Delhi

Rosendale

New York

Cuddlebackville

Albany

Yonkers

Montour Falls

Otego

Oxford

Narrowsburg

New York

Dryden

Cohoes

Rochester

Buffalo

Brooklyn

Ithaca

Garrison

Bronx

Watkins Glen

New York City

New York

Poestenkill

Green Party of Brooklyn	Brooklyn
Green Sanctuary Committee, CCNY, UU	New York
Healthy Planet	Huntington
Hudson River Sloop Clearwater	Beacon
Human Impacts Institute	Brooklyn
Hunger Action Network of NYS	Albany
iEat Green	Old Westbury
Long Island Progressive Coalition	Massapequa
Metro NY Catholic Climate Movement	New York
Morningside Gardens Green Committee for Sustainable Development	New York
Morningside Hts/W. Harlem Sanitation Coalition	New York
Mothers Out Front	Keene
New Economy Project	New York
New York Communities for Change (NYCC)	New York
New York Heartwoods	Kingston
New York Interfaith Power & Light	Lincolndale
New York Public Interest Research Group (NYPIRG)	New York
North American Climate, Conservation and Environment (NACCE)	Roosevelt
North Country 350 Alliance	Colton
Northeast Organic Farming Association of New York	Newark
Nuclear Age Peace Foundation	New York
Nuclear Information and Resource Service	Takoma Park
NYC Friends of Clearwater	New York City
NYC Grassroots Alliance	New York
NYC H2O	New York
NYH2O	New York City
NYU Divest for Climate Justice	New York
Occupy Bergen County	Woodcliff Lake
Operation SPLASH	Freeport
Partnership for Global Justice	New York
Partnership for Policy Integrity	Albany
Peacemakers of Schoharie County	Cobleskill
People of Albany United for Safe Energy	Albany
People's Climate Movement - Capital District	Albany
Rainforest Relief	Jersey City
Renewable Energy Long Island	East Hampton
Riverkeeper	Ossining
ROAR (Religious Organizations Along the River)	Hawthorne
Sara Roosevelt Park Community Coalition	New York City
Seneca Lake Guardian	Watkins Glen
Shaleshock CNY	Syracuse
Sierra Club NYC Group	New York City
Sisters of St. Dominic of Blauvelt, New York	Blauvelt
Slow Food North Shore	Old Westbury

Solar Seneca	Interlaken
Solarize Albany	Slingerlands
South Asian Fund For Education, Scholarship and Training (SAFEST)	New York City
Stephanie Low Artists Inc.	New York
Stone Quarry House	Ithaca
Stop NY Fracked Gas Pipeline	Canaan
SUNY New Paltz Environmental Task Force	New Paltz
Sustainable Tompkins	Ithaca
Sustainable Warwick	Warwick
The Climate Reality NYC Metro Chapter	New York City
The Strebel Planning Group	Ithaca
Tompkins County Climate Protections Initiative	Ithaca
Unitarian Universalist Women's Association- Metro District	New York
United for Action	New York City
Upper Green Side	New York
We Are Seneca Lake	Corning
Weather Medic Inc.	North Tonawanda
WESPAC Foundation	White Plains
West Dryden Residents Against the Pipeline	Freeville
WNY Peace Center	Buffalo