

McGill Environment Student's Society

mcgill.environment@gmail.com

TO: The Board of Governors of McGill University

CC: The Committee to Advise on Matters of Social Responsibility of McGill University

Montreal, February 27th 2013

Dear Members of the Board of Governors,

The McGill Environment Students' Society (MESS) represents Environment students at the undergraduate level. Roughly, we comprise of 380 environment majors and diploma students, and 220 minors at McGill University. MESS promotes the interests of students in the School of Environment through cultural, educational, recreational and social events and activities. Additionally, our mandate involves the promotion of environmental awareness and the exhibition of environmental responsibility.

As students of the McGill School of Environment, MESS members carry an important role in aiding society in making environmentally conscious choices, amid diverse environmental worldviews, that will sustain healthy societies within a flourishing biosphere.

McGill University is teaching MESS' members to become stewards of the earth. Therefore, MESS agrees that as a learning institution, McGill should show concern for the environmentally and socially devastating effects of the projects conducted by fossil fuel companies.. Thus, MESS officially endorses Divest McGill's goal to encourage McGill University's divestment from the fossil fuel industry. Our endorsement passed by a vote supported by 89% out of the 85 MESS members who voted .

As a worldwide leading institution invested in improving the future through education, McGill has an important role to play in how the transition towards sustainable, healthier societies less dependent on fossil fuels is made. Over 250 Universities across North America are encouraging their administrators to divest from fossil fuels. Although McGill stands to reap a profit from said holdings in the fossil fuel industry, it is not a sustainable profit and it is not one that will instill welfare for future generations both at McGill and within the broader Canadian and global community. MESS therefore believes that our University must find alternative investments of a more sustainable nature. These investments should reflect the values, mission, and vision of the McGill community. For some to follow, some must lead and we feel that as reputable as McGill is, it should take advantage of this opportunity to set the example for a new future.

McGill has the choice to be an exemplary institution, transitioning away from the unhealthy, harmful, and unsustainable dependence on fossil fuels. We urge our University to divest its holdings from fossil fuel companies in the near future. By doing so, McGill will be choosing and building the path towards a shared vision for a better future that integrates social, economic, and environmental dimensions.

Sincerely,

MESS council on behalf of the undergraduate students at the McGill School of Environment.