

March 13, 2025

Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer
322 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries
2267 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Re: No Immunity for the Fossil Fuel Industry

Dear Leader Schumer and Leader Jeffries,

As we witness the new Trump administration work alongside powerful corporate interests to systemically assault environmental protections, the rule of law, and bedrock democratic principles, we write to urge Democratic members of the House and Senate to proactively and affirmatively reject any proposal that would shield fossil fuel companies from the growing number of legal and legislative efforts to hold them accountable for their role in the climate crisis.

Communities across the United States — from Los Angeles to Asheville, North Carolina — are struggling to protect residents and infrastructure from extreme weather events that are becoming more deadly and destructive as a result of pollution from fossil fuels. The biggest oil and gas companies that produce, market, and sell those fossil fuels have known for decades that their products posed a “potentially catastrophic”¹ risk to the climate, but as a joint House-Senate committee investigation last year concluded, they have engaged in a long-running and ongoing campaign to deceive the public, protect their profits, and delay our transition to cleaner and safer energy.²

Now 1 in 4 people in the United States live in a state or local government that is taking ExxonMobil and other major fossil fuel companies to court to hold them accountable for this deception and make them pay for the damage their climate lies have caused.³ Separately, a growing number of state legislatures are considering so-called climate superfund laws, which would force the biggest privately owned climate polluters to help

¹ <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/climate-consensus-97-per-cent/2018/sep/19/shell-and-exxons-secret-1980s-climate-change-warnings>

² <https://www.budget.senate.gov/chairman/newsroom/press/whitehouse-raskin-urge-doj-to-investigate-fossil-fuel-disinformation->

³ <https://climateintegrity.org/lawsuits>

pay for the growing costs to protect public infrastructure from climate-fueled damages. The fossil fuel industry has fiercely attacked these lawsuits and legislative efforts in court, but to date has not succeeded in its efforts to escape accountability.

President Trump has vowed to quash lawsuits against the fossil fuel industry,⁴ and at least twice in recent history — once in 2017,⁵ and again in 2020, during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic — there have been documented efforts by oil companies and their allies to secure a blanket waiver of liability for their industry. In response to the latter effort, 60 Democratic House members urged leadership to categorically oppose efforts to “immunize polluters.”⁶ “Shielding the carbon polluters from legal accountability does not belong on our agenda,” they wrote then. That principled solidarity is even more important and urgent now.

We have reason to believe that the fossil fuel industry and its allies will use the chaos and overreach of the new Trump administration to attempt yet again to pass some form of liability waiver and shield themselves from facing consequences for their decades of pollution and deception. That effort — no matter what form it takes — must not be allowed to succeed.

Our communities across the country are suffering grave threats to our public health, safety, and economic security as a result of Big Oil’s climate deception and pollution. Governments, residents, businesses, and others must have access to legal and legislative remedies in order to hold fossil fuel companies accountable, seek justice, and make polluters pay.

We know there are many important fights for justice and accountability that are taking place now and that will occur in the months and years that follow. But we, the undersigned organizations, respectfully urge you in the strongest possible terms to draw a line in the sand now — before fossil fuel industry allies divulge their specific plans — and unite your caucuses in firm opposition to any Congressional efforts to bail out climate polluters from facing legal and legislative consequences for their central role in the climate crisis.

Thank you for standing on the side of justice and accountability.

Sincerely,

⁴ <https://subscriber.politicopro.com/article/eenews/2023/09/11/trump-vows-to-block-climate-litigation-against-big-oil-00114744>

⁵ <https://subscriber.politicopro.com/article/eenews/1060056423>

⁶ <https://raskin.house.gov/2020/5/raskin-leads-60-members-opposing-climate-change-immunity-grabs-fossil-fuel>

Adirondack Voters for Change
ALIGN
All Our Energy
Allegheny County Clean Air Now
Alliance for Justice
Alliance of Maine Health
Professionals for Climate Action
American Association for Justice
Americans for Financial Reform
Arizona Health Professionals for
Climate Action
Better Future Project
Big Reuse
Bold Alliance
Breathe Project
Bronx River - Sound Shore Audubon
California Environmental Voters
Campaign for Renewable Energy
Capital District Community Energy
Community Advocates for a
Sustainable Environment
Catholic Charities Tompkins/Tioga
Justice & Peace Ministry
Center for Biological Diversity
Center for Climate Change and
Health
Center for Climate Integrity
Center for Justice & Democracy
Cherokee Concerned Citizens
Chesapeake Climate Action Network
Church Women United in New York
State
Citizen Action of New York
Citizens Climate Lobby - Brooklyn
Citizens Committee for Flood Relief
Clean Water Action
Clean, Healthy, Educated, Safe &
Sustainable Community, Inc.
Clean+Healthy
Climate Changemakers
Climate Code Blue
Climate Equity Policy Center
Climate Families NYC
Climate Generation
Climate Hawks Vote
Climate Health Now
Climate Reality Project Chicago
Metro Chapter
Coalition to SAVE the Menominee
River, Inc.
Coastal Research and Education
Society of Long Island
Communitopia
Community Advocates for a
Sustainable Environment
Concerned Health Professionals of
New York
Consumer Federation of America
Consumer Watchdog

Corporate Accountability
Courage California
Damascus Citizens for Sustainability
Deep Green Resistance NYC
Delaware-Otsego Audubon Society
Don't Gas the Meadowlands
Coalition
Earth Ethics, Inc.
Earthjustice
EcoEquity
Elders Climate Action
Elders Climate Action Mass
Empower New Jersey
Environmental Advocates NY
Extinction Rebellion US
Extreme Weather Survivors
Food & Water Watch
For Love of Water
For the Many
Fossil Free California
Fossil Free Tompkins
FrackBustersNY
Friends of the Clearwater
Friends of the Earth US
Gas Free Seneca
Gen-Z for Change
Grassroots Environmental Education
Greater Boston Physicians for Social
Responsibility
Green Ossining
GreenFaith
GreenLatinos
HabitatMap
Health Professionals for a Healthy
Climate
Human Impact Partners
Impact Fund
Indivisible ADK/Saratoga
Indivisible Harlem
Indivisible Mohawk Valley Climate
Crisis WG
Inner City Green Team
Jewish Climate Action Network,
NYC
Jewish Climate Action Network, MA
Junta Comunitaria Pastillo Tibes
Corp
Long Island Progressive Coalition
Maine Climate Action Now
Make Polluters Pay
Metro Justice
Micah Six Eight Mission
Michigan Climate Action Network
Michigan Clinicians for Climate
Action
Middlefield Neighbors
Missouri River Bird Observatory
MN350
Mothers Out Front
Mothers* Rebellion Global

National Association of Consumer Advocates	Philadelphia Solar Energy Association
National Consumers league	Physicians for Social Responsibility, Colorado
Natural Resources Defense Council	Physicians for Social Responsibility, Maine
New Paltz Interfaith Earth Action	Physicians for Social Responsibility, Pennsylvania
New York Communities for Change	Physicians for Social Responsibility, Texas
New York Lawyers for the Public Interest	Progressive Schenectady
New York Progressive Action Network	Public Citizen
New Yorkers for Clean Power	Public Justice
NH Healthy Climate	Quaker Action Mid-Atlantic Region
North American Climate, Conservation and Environment	Ratepayer and Community Intervenors, Finger Lakes, NY
North Country Earth Action	Reach Out America
North Shore Audubon Society	ReAL Edgemere CLT
North Star Fund	Reclaim Our Power
NY Public Interest Research Group	Regenerating Paradise
NY State Council of Churches	Rise Economy
NY-GEO	Rising Sun Center for Opportunity
NYCD16/15 Indivisible	Rivers & Mountains GreenFaith
NYPAN Environmental Committee	RPI Sunrise Movement
Oil and Gas Action Network	San Francisco Bay Physicians for Social Responsibility
Oil Change International	Sane Energy Project
Oregon League of Conservation Voters	Seneca Lake Guardian
Oregon Physicians for Social Responsibility	Serpentine Art and Nature Commons
Park County Environmental Council	Sierra Club
People for a Healthy Environment	Sierra Club Pennsylvania Chapter
Peoples Climate Movement - NY	

Sisters of St Joseph of Rochester, Office of Justice and Care for Creation	Ulster Activist
Sisters of St. Dominic of Blauvelt, NY	Union of Concerned Scientists
Solarize Albany	United For Clean Energy
South Bronx Unite	United Muslim Alliance of Albany
Stand.earth	Upper Nyack Green Committee
Staten Island Urban Center	Vermont Natural Resources Council
Stop NY Fracked Gas Pipeline	Vermont Public Interest Research Group
Sunrise Movement	Virginia Clinicians for Climate Action
SUNY New Paltz Environmental Task Force	Virginia League of Conservation Voters
Sustainable Finger Lakes	Washington Physicians for Social Responsibility
Take Action Advocacy Group	Weber Sustainability Consulting
TakeAction Minnesota	WESPAC Foundation, Inc.
The Climate Center	Westchester for Change
The Climate Reality Project New York Chapters Coalition	Worcester Congregations for Climate and Environmental Justice
The Rachel Carson Council	198 methods
Third Act	350 Bay Area
Third Act Lawyers	350 Conejo / San Fernando Valley
Third Act Massachusetts	350 Wisconsin
Third Act Maryland	350Brooklyn
Third Act NYC	350Hawaii
Third Act Upstate New York	350PDX
Third Act Virginia	
Three Rivers Waterkeeper	
TIAA-Divest!	
Tompkins County Climate Protection Initiative	