

1                                   **Resolution in Support of Fossil Fuel Divestment**

2                                   **Motion by: University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point**

3                                   **Ad-Hoc Sustainability Committee**

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5   **Whereas:** According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the proven coal, oil and gas  
6 reserves of the top 200 fossil-fuel companies are about 2,795 gigatons of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) which is  
7 five times the amount we can release to stay below 2 degrees Celsius (3.6°F),<sup>1</sup> the temperature which  
8 climate scientists estimate to be the highest safe increase in planetary warming;

9   **Whereas:** Anthropogenic (human-caused) climate change poses a threat to Wisconsin since the statewide  
10 annual temperature is projected to rise 4 to 9 degrees Fahrenheit by the middle of the century;<sup>2</sup>

11   **Whereas:** The Conference of Parties' 21st meeting (COP21) in 2015 aimed to strengthen the global  
12 response to the threat of climate change by keeping global temperature rise less than 2 degrees Celsius  
13 from pre-industrial levels;

14   **Whereas:** As of November 21, 2016, 112 out of 197 Parties to the Convention from COP21 in Paris have  
15 ratified the agreement;

16   **Whereas:** The City of Madison, Bayfield County, and Dane County have all pledged to divest from fossil  
17 fuels, showing that other Wisconsinites are climate conscious;<sup>3</sup>

18   **Whereas:** Several University of Wisconsin System Universities are signatories to the American College  
19 and University Presidents' Climate Change Commitment (ACUPCCC);

20   **Whereas:** The movement of divestment from holdings in fossil fuel companies has grown rapidly so that,  
21 as of December 2016, 641 institutions have committed to divestment, totaling an approximate value of  
22 \$3.4 trillion;<sup>3</sup>

23   **Whereas:** More than 40 Universities and colleges across the globe have chosen a fossil free portfolio.  
24 The University of California System, University of Maryland, and Yale University have all committed to  
25 divestment, either full or partial;

26 **Whereas:** Unity College, the first institution of higher education to divest in fossil fuels, committed to  
27 full divestment in 2012. Deborah Cronin, VP of Finance and Administrations at Unity college reports on  
28 fossil free portfolio: “Our investment performance was in no way negatively impacted by this strategy,”

29 **Whereas:** The University of Wisconsin System's Mission statement states “Inherent in this mission are  
30 methods of instruction, research, extended education, and public service designed to educate people and  
31 improve the human condition.” Based on the threats to the human condition that climate change poses,  
32 fossil fuel divestment is necessary to fulfil this mission;

33 **Whereas:** The University of Wisconsin System has committed to sustainability stating, “Our University  
34 of Wisconsin institutions have produced a long legacy of environmental awareness and stewardship that  
35 has greatly influenced human ethics, laws and practices, extending well beyond the boundaries of the  
36 state to the entire planet. This legacy can be found in the writings of Muir and Leopold, the laws of  
37 Gaylord Nelson, our university system’s diverse research and academic disciplines, and the dedication of  
38 our faculty, students, and staff to carry these ideas and commitments forward. As a result, it is our desire  
39 as a system of university institutions, that our commitments and behaviors be ecologically sound,  
40 economically efficient, and socially responsible now, and for future generations to come.”;<sup>4</sup>

41 **Therefore, be it resolved:** That the University of Wisconsin System Student Representatives supports  
42 complete financial divestment from the top 200 coal, oil, and gas companies by all University of  
43 Wisconsin System Foundations so that University of Wisconsin System will lead our communities, state,  
44 and nation in sustainability;

45 **Therefore, be it resolved:** The UW System Student Representatives supports a complete divestment  
46 from all foundation assets, including mutual funds, that are invested in aforementioned companies, by  
47 fiscal year 2022;

48 **Therefore, be it resolved:** To divest from aforementioned companies, the University of Wisconsin  
49 System Student Representatives recommends the specific foundations utilize the Dow Jones  
50 Sustainability Index in all future investment decisions;<sup>5</sup>

51 **Therefore, let it be finally Resolved:** That the University of Wisconsin System Student Representatives  
52 shall forward this resolution to: University of Wisconsin Foundation Board of Trustees, University of  
53 Wisconsin Foundation President and CEO Michael M. Knetter, University of Wisconsin Foundation  
54 Chief Investment Officer Julie M. Van Cleave, University of Wisconsin Foundation Investment Analyst  
55 David Golden, University of Wisconsin System President Ray Cross, University of Wisconsin-Stevens  
56 Point Chancellor Patterson, University of Wisconsin-Madison Chancellor Blank, University of  
57 Wisconsin-Eau Claire Chancellor Schmidt, University of Wisconsin-La Crosse Chancellor Gow,  
58 University of Wisconsin-River Falls Chancellor Van Galen, University of Wisconsin-Superior Chancellor  
59 Wachter, University of Wisconsin-Parkside Chancellor Ford, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee  
60 Chancellor Mone, University of Wisconsin-Stout Chancellor Meyer, University of Wisconsin-Green Bay  
61 Chancellor Miller, University of Wisconsin-Platteville Chancellor Shields, University of Wisconsin-  
62 Whitewater Chancellor Kopper, University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh Chancellor Leavitt, and University of  
63 Wisconsin Colleges and University of Wisconsin-Extension Chancellor Sandeen, University of  
64 Wisconsin-Milwaukee Foundation Chair Fredrick, University of Wisconsin-Green Bay Foundation Chair  
65 Mueller, University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh Foundation President Rathjen, University of Wisconsin-La  
66 Crosse Foundation President Reichert, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire Foundation President Way,  
67 University of Wisconsin-Stout Foundation President Kornegor, University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point  
68 Foundation President Roberts, University of Wisconsin-River Falls Foundation President Mueller,  
69 University of Wisconsin-Whitewater Foundation President Enslin, University of Wisconsin-Platteville  
70 Foundation Chair Ralph, University of Wisconsin-Parkside Foundation President Haubrich, .University of  
71 Wisconsin-Superior Foundation President Anderson, University of Wisconsin-Barron County Executive  
72 Director Barb Ritzinger, University of Wisconsin-Washington County Executive Director Joan Rudnitzki,  
73 University of Wisconsin-Marinette President Amy Schwaba, University of Wisconsin-Marathon County  
74 President Patrick Bradley, University of Wisconsin-Marshfield/Wood County Executive Director Roxie  
75 Wetterau, University of Wisconsin-Fox Valley Executive Director Diane Abraham, University of  
76 Wisconsin-Manitowoc Executive Director Roxanna Strawn, University of Wisconsin-Sheboygan

77 President Elizabeth Braden, University of Wisconsin-Rock County President Dennis Condon, University  
78 of Wisconsin-Waukesha Executive Director Deb Renning, University of Wisconsin-Richland Foundation  
79 Executive Secretary Darlo Wentz, University of Wisconsin-Baraboo/Sauk County President Tim Teelin,  
80 and University of Wisconsin-Fond du Lac President Joseph Tasch.

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#### **Sources:**

- 83 1. IPCC (2014), Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change,  
84 <http://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar5/wg2/>
- 85 2. Wisconsin Initiative on Climate Change Impacts, <http://www.wicci.wisc.edu/>
- 86 3. Go Fossil Free Divestment Commitments, <http://gofossilfree.org/commitments/>
- 87 4. University of Wisconsin System Sustainability, <https://www.wisconsin.edu/sustainability/>
- 88 5. Dow Jones Sustainability Indices, <http://www.djindexes.com/sustainability/>

#### **Actions Taken:**

This resolution was approved at the December 10, 2016 meeting of the University of Wisconsin System Student Representatives by a vote of 11-6-0.