



COMMUNITY RIGHTS
OVER CORPORATE POWER

www.COCRN.org



October 30, 2015

Nick Stubler
DivestDU
2199 S. University Blvd.
Denver CO 80208

Dear Nick:

The Colorado Community Rights Network (COCRN) is proud to endorse the efforts of the DivestDU group.

The immense corporate power of the fossil fuel industry has long prevented our country from taking meaningful steps to address climate change and climate justice. On October 26, 2015, Shannon Hall published an article in Scientific American¹ about a recent InsideClimate News investigation² showing that Exxon (now Exxon Mobil) researched and understood the possible impacts of climate change 40 years ago. According to Hall,

- * James Black, their senior scientist, delivered his message to Exxon's management committee in July, 1977: "In the first place, there is general agreement that the most likely manner in which mankind is influencing the global climate is through carbon dioxide release from the burning of fossil fuels."
- * "A year later he [Black] warned Exxon that doubling CO2 gases in the atmosphere would increase average global temperatures by two or three degrees - a number that is consistent with the scientific consensus today. He continued to warn 'present thinking holds that man has a time window of five to 10 years before the need for hard decisions regarding changes in energy strategies might become critical.'"

¹ <http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/exxon-knew-about-climate-change-almost-40-years-ago/>

² <http://insideclimatenews.org/content/Exxon-The-Road-Not-Taken>

As a result of the InsideClimate News research, there are growing calls for criminal prosecution of Exxon Mobil for not acting on this information and for distorting climate change research. Taking direct action to stop the human cause of climate change is even more urgent, as the window for early and low cost actions that James Black mentioned has long passed. This is why a community rights approach to climate change is so important.

Our Colorado Community Rights Amendment (CCRA) will empower us to work together in our towns, cities and counties to stop causing climate change. It will empower us to enact local laws that cannot be preempted by the state on behalf of the fossil fuel industry. The CCRA's legal structure uniquely counteracts the current legal paradigm that gives corporate executives control over community majorities.

The work of DivestDU is a similar community approach. It removes the money, while the CCRA removes the legal power that has fueled the current destructive paradigm. Divestment is powerful and compelling. We celebrate your good work and ask you to work with us to take local responsibility for stopping the human cause of climate change.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Dianne V. Thiel". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Dianne V. Thiel for

COCRN Board