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November 9, 2015

To: Chancellor Rebecca Chopp, Chairman of the Board of Trustees Doug Scrivner, Board Member KC Gallagher and Vice Chancellor Craig Woody

From: The Undergraduate Student Government at the University of Denver

On behalf of the nearly 5,500 undergraduate students that we represent, the Undergraduate Student Government respectfully writes to you today to show our support for, and urge your support of, divestment from fossil fuels at the University of Denver.

Every day, we have the honor and responsibility of representing the students that are integral in making this institution an invigorating and exciting place to learn, live, and lead. More than 1500 of our peers have signed onto [a petition](#) calling for divestment at DU, encouraging our institution to join the likes of benchmark institutions such as Stanford University and Syracuse University.

Climate change is one of the most significant issues facing our generation, and generations of future Pioneers. The fossil fuel industry currently owns nearly five times the amount of carbon that our world can safely burn before crossing thresholds of emissions that will be disastrous for our planet. There are many ways in which leaders in education, government, politics and business must combat the current state of environmental degradation. One of the most historically effective strategies of standing against complex wrongs, such as the South African apartheid and the Sudanese government, has been divestiture. In addition to exploring greater use of renewable energy sources, among many other green solutions, global leaders such as President Barack Obama, Former Vice President Al Gore and The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), have endorsed divestment as one way to fulfill our moral duty of climate action. Moreover, we are encouraged that many of these endorsements have come with [assurance that divestment does not risk financial health](#). It is the hope of the Undergraduate Student Government that the University of Denver will follow suit and consider divesting from the top 100 coal and top 100 gas companies, and re-investing in perpetual and renewable energy.

Last year, USG passed a unanimous resolution in support of the Divest DU movement, declaring that "The University of Denver strives to be a pioneer in every sense of the word, attempting to trail blaze both academically, within its community, and professionally," and that "The University of Denver's Undergraduate Student Government, as DU's Undergraduate representative body; endorse[s] Divest DU's efforts in convincing the Board Of Trustees' Investment Committee to commit to divesting in Fossil Fuels in the future." Today, we renew this support with vigor - a new group who believes that the University of Denver has a moral



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commitment to reducing our carbon footprint, and is in support of exploring the possibilities by putting divestment to a vote of the Board of Trustees.

The University of Denver has proclaimed itself a “Private university dedicated to the Public Good.” Commitment to the Public Good is no small feat. Often, difficult decisions need to be weighed, and made, when determining how we can grow our institution in the ways set forth in the DU Impact2025 Plan while also keeping the Public Good at heart. After having the privilege of working with many administrators at this institution, we feel confident in the ability of the University of Denver to find a solution that maintains our university’s commitment to reducing our direct role in climate change while also furthering the financial and institutional success of DU.

The Undergraduate Student Government supports the Divest DU movement, and humbly requests that the issue of divestment be brought to the Spring Board of Trustees meeting for a vote.

Signed,

The Undergraduate Student Government of the University of Denver