

DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE FROM DIRTY ENERGY

When in the course of human events, a nation's energy policies compromise the health, security and prosperity of its people, and cause global climate disruption, a new path must be taken. We, the youth of the United States of America, declare our independence from dirty energy. We demand that our nation reject dirty energy sources such as fossil fuels, nuclear and incineration, and make a strong commitment to energy efficiency and clean, renewable energy technologies such as wind and solar. As the rest of the industrialized world makes the shift to a clean energy economy, the United States is falling behind and our generation will pay the price.

Whereas our nation's addiction to dirty energy has caused:

- Toxic pollution, rising rates of asthma, cancers and nearly 24,000 deaths from power plant pollution alone each year¹ that disproportionately impact low-income communities and communities of color²;
- Economic stagnation from rising fuel costs³ and the outsourcing of U.S. energy-sector jobs⁴;
- International conflict⁵ and dependence on foreign oil⁶;
- Global warming, which already kills 160,000 people every year due to more intense hurricanes, severe droughts and floods, heat waves and the spread of infectious diseases.⁷

Therefore, we, the undersigned, demand that the United States:

DECLARE FREEDOM FROM OIL! The United States has less than 5 percent of the world's population yet consumes 25 percent of the world's dwindling oil supply.⁸ Our nation must dramatically improve fuel efficiency and lead the way toward zero emissions vehicles. Raising the average fuel economy standard to 40 miles per gallon would create more than 160,000 jobs and reduce oil consumption in the U.S. by 2.3 million barrels of oil per day by 2015, an amount nearly equal to our current imports from the Persian Gulf.⁹

INVEST IN CLEAN ENERGY! The United States spends billions of dollars every year subsidizing powerful dirty energy corporations like ExxonMobil, Exelon Nuclear and Peabody Coal.¹⁰ Our nation must shift these investments into energy efficiency and a new generation of clean energy sources such as wind and solar, which will create millions of new jobs and improve our economy.¹¹

ACHIEVE ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE! The United States consistently sites power plants, mining operations, and other environmental hazards near poor communities and communities of color. Our nation must demand that all energy policies be based on mutual respect and justice for all peoples, free from any form of discrimination or bias.¹²

STOP GLOBAL WARMING! The United States creates nearly a quarter of the world's global warming pollution,¹³ but has worked to derail the Kyoto Protocol, the only international treaty addressing the problem. Our nation must create a mandatory cap on global warming pollution at home, re-engage international climate negotiations and invest in clean energy for developing countries.

We, the youth of the United States of America, challenge all politicians and leaders of our institutions to lay out their plan for a complete transition beyond dirty energy. In defense of our and future generations, we declare our firm commitment to a clean energy future!

Signed,

VISIT WWW.ENERGYACTION.NET FOR MORE INFORMATION

FOOTNOTES TO THE DECLARATION

- 1 *Dirty Air, Dirty Power: Mortality and Health Damage Due to Air Pollution from Power Plants* – Clear the Air
(<http://cta.policy.net/dirtypower/docs/dirtyAir.pdf>)
- 2 *Air of Injustice: African Americans and Power Plant Pollution* – Clear the Air
(http://cta.policy.net/fact/injustice_factsheet.pdf); more examples at <http://www.energyjustice.net/ej/>
- 3 *Trade and Development Report 2004* – United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)
(http://www.unctad.org/en/docs//tdr2004_en.pdf)
- 4 *Putting Renewables to Work: How Many Jobs Can the Clean Energy Industry Generate?* – Renewable and Appropriate Energy Technology Laboratory, UC Berkeley (<http://ist-socrates.berkeley.edu/~rael/renewables.jobs.pdf>)
- 5 *Greed and Grievance in Civil War* – The World Bank
(http://econ.worldbank.org/files/12205_greedgrievance_23oct.pdf)
- 6 *Annual Energy Outlook 2004 with Projections to 2025* – Energy Information Administration
(<http://www.eia.doe.gov/oiaf/aeo/gas.html>)
- 7 *Global Warming Mortality Estimated at Upwards of 150,000 Per Year* – United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (<http://www.unisdr.org/eng/risk-reduction/climate-change/rd-cch-infolink2-03-eng.htm#n13>)
- 8 *The Pipeline War: Charting the World's Oil* – PBS Frontline World
(<http://www.pbs.org/frontlineworld/stories/colombia/oila.html>)
- 9 *Creating Jobs, Saving Energy and Protecting the Environment* – Union of Concerned Scientists
(http://www.ucsusa.org/clean_vehicles/cars_and_suvs/page.cfm?pageID=1473)
- 10 *Green Scissors 2003: Cutting Wasteful and Environmentally Harmful Spending* – Green Scissors
(<http://www.greenscissors.org/publications/gs2003.pdf>)
- 11 *Putting Renewables to Work: How Many Jobs Can the Clean Energy Industry Generate?* – Renewable and Appropriate Energy Technology Laboratory, UC Berkeley (<http://ist-socrates.berkeley.edu/~rael/renewables.jobs.pdf>)
- 12 Inspired by the *Principles of Environmental Justice*: Drafted and Adopted at the First National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit held on October 24- 27, 1991, in Washington DC
(<http://www.ejnet.org/ej/principles.html>)
- 13 *Climate Change Information Sheet 30* – United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
(<http://unfccc.int/resource/iuckit/fact30.html>)