

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

December 1, 2016

President-elect Donald J. Trump
Trump-Pence Transition Team
1717 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, DC 20006

Dear President-elect Trump:

We write, some of us now a second time, to urge you to follow through on your promise that you would work to reduce the influence of corporate special interests and lobbyists in our government. We are alarmed to see your transition team is replete with lobbyists and others with extensive ties to the fossil fuel industry leading your transition efforts and mentioned as potential nominees to lead the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Department of Energy (DOE), and Department of the Interior (DOI). Your decision to empower people like Myron Ebell, Thomas Pyle, and Doug Domenech to chart a path for agencies that protect our public health and natural resources suggests that you are less interested in draining the swamp than you are filling it with exactly the kinds of insiders that most Americans hoped you would reject.

EPA's transition head, Myron Ebell, has a long history of working for industry-funded front groups like the Frontiers of Freedom/Frontiers of Freedom Institute (FOF) and Competitive Enterprise Institute (CEI). At various times, the groups have been funded by the likes of Philip Morris, ExxonMobil, and the Koch family foundations.

At FOF, Ebell was one of the authors of the infamous "Global Climate Science Communications" action plan, a multimillion-dollar public relations campaign to undermine climate science and to raise "questions among those (e.g. Congress) who chart the future U.S. course on global climate change." ExxonMobil, Koch family foundations, Koch-connected Donors Capital and Donors Trust, and coal companies Murray Energy and Massey Energy have poured money into CEI and its affiliated "Cooler Heads Coalition," that Ebell chairs. Polling consistently shows the majority of the American people support EPA protections. In addition to being out of step with the public, putting the fossil fuel-industry funded point person in charge of the Environmental Protection Agency is putting the fox in charge of the hen house.

Thomas Pyle, the transition head for the Department of Energy, is a former lobbyist for oil and gas companies who has made a career of fighting clean energy and denying climate science to benefit the fossil fuel industry. Pyle is currently the President of both the Institute for Energy Research (IER) and its advocacy-wing, the American Energy Alliance (AEA). He has consistently denied the basics of climate science and is a frequent attendee to Koch brother mega-donor summits that raise hundreds of millions of dollars for general election ads promoting fossil fuels and attacking the clean energy industry. The IER and AEA have received over \$300,000 from ExxonMobil since 1998 and nearly \$4 million from Freedom Partners, the "de-facto bank" of the Koch brothers. His appointment gives big oil and gas more opportunities to line their pockets while offloading the costs of their pollution on middle-class Americans.

A number of the same industry funders support the Texas Public Policy Foundation (TPPF) where Douglas Domenech, the head of your Department of Interior transition team, has led the Fueling Freedom initiative since 2015. Koch Industries and Koch family foundations have given over \$1 million to TPPF between 2004 and 2014. TPPF has also benefited enormously from identity-scrubbers Donors Trust and Donors Capital Fund, which together gave over \$3.75 million during the same time period. Exxon Mobil has also shown its support, giving \$100,000 during the years from 2001 to 2011.

On the campaign trail, you told the American people that, “decades of special interest dealing, must and will come to an end. We have to break the cycle of corruption, and we have to give new voices a chance to go into government service.” By appointing these special interest insiders to your transition team, you have raised serious questions about your desire to “drain the swamp” with respect to energy and environmental issues. If you are not willing to remove these corporate insiders from your transition team, you should direct them to disclose their and their organizations’ financial supporters so we all know whose interests are being represented in your Administration. Going forward, we urge you to adopt stronger ethics rules, like those implemented by President Obama, that prohibit lobbyists from working on your transition team or in your Administration in policy areas in which they recently lobbied.

Additionally, we ask you to ensure the transition and cabinet-level leads for the agencies charged with protecting public health and our natural resources will heed the call you and three of your children made in a 2009 full-page ad in the New York Times:

[W]e urge you, our government, to strengthen and pass United States legislation, and lead the world by example. We support your effort to ensure meaningful and effective measures to control climate change, an immediate challenge facing the United States and the world today. Please don't postpone the earth. If we fail to act now, it is scientifically irrefutable that there will be catastrophic and irreversible consequences for humanity and our planet.

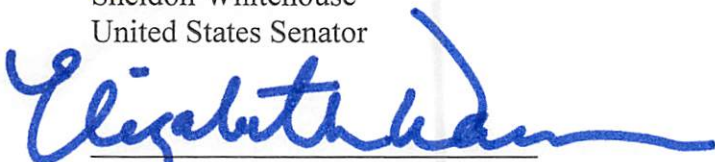
Sincerely,



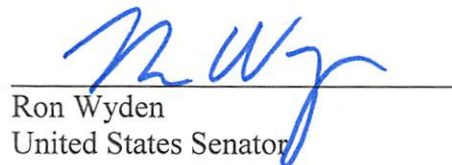
Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator



Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator



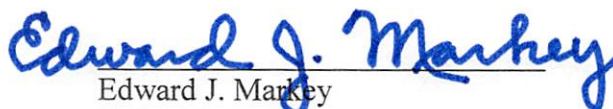
Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



Ron Wyden
United States Senator



Tom Udall
United States Senator



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



Bernard Sanders
United States Senator



Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senator



Al Franken
United States Senator