

# Fossil Fueled Foolery

An Illustrated Primer on the  
Top 10 Manipulation  
Tactics of the Fossil Fuel Industry



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## *Environmental & Climate Justice Program*

**Date of Publication: April 1, 2019**

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### *Environmental and Climate Justice Program's Mission*

Advancing the leadership of frontline communities to eliminate environmental and climate injustices and ignite an environmental, social, and economic revolution.

### *NAACP Mission*

The mission of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) is to ensure the political, educational, social, and economic equality of rights of all persons and to eliminate race-based discrimination.

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# *Fossil Fueled Foolery*

## An Illustrated Primer on the Top 10 Manipulation Tactics of the Fossil Fuel Industry

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Today, April 1st, 2019, is a fitting day for the NAACP to commit to equipping our communities with the tools to resist Fossil Fueled Foolery. Fossil fuel companies target the NAACP for manipulation and co-optation. We must fortify ourselves. In the words of Shirley Chisholm, we must be “Unbought, Unbossed, and Unbamboozled.”



Recent reports by the NAACP and partners say it all: Coal Blooded: Putting Profits Before People, Fumes Across the Fenceline, and Lights Out in the Cold: Reforming Utility Shut Off Policies as if Human Rights Matter, etc. These studies follow in the footsteps of researchers and activists such as Dr. Robert Bullard, Nia Robinson, Maureen Taylor, Dr. Manuel Pastor, Peggy Shephard, and so many others. There is a common thread of consistent findings demonstrating the disproportionate impact of exploitive fossil fuel company practices and pollution on communities of color and low-income communities. Too often these impacts have fatal effects. From high rates of cancer clusters to asthma related deaths, to lung disease, and more, the impacts are devastating.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has put the world on a 12-year countdown to take urgent and aggressive action on eliminating the greenhouse gas emissions that drive climate change. We must do so to avert reaching the point of no return in terms of catastrophic climate change. As such, we must not allow ourselves to be fooled by those whose only goal is to amass wealth without regard for the planet or its inhabitants. Already communities of color, low-income communities, and nations in the global south, are feeling the extreme impacts of climate change first and worse. Tragic results include shifts in agricultural yield impacting food access in already food insecure communities. Impacts also include displacement of communities by sea level rise. Loss of life, livelihood, and property from widespread disasters are also devastating results.

The Hill reports that, “In the three years since most of the world’s nations signed on to the Paris climate agreement, major oil and gas companies have poured more than \$100 billion into their fossil-fuel infrastructure. That’s more than 10 times the amount the same companies have spent on low-carbon investments, despite lip service toward that area, according to a new report by Influence Map.”<sup>1</sup> Banking on Climate Change 2019, a report by the Indigenous Environmental Network and partners, reveals that 33 global banks have provided almost \$2 trillion to fossil fuel companies since the adoption of the Paris climate accord at the end of 2015. The amount of financing has risen in each of the past two years.<sup>2</sup>

1. Ivanova, Irina. “After Paris Agreement, big oil and gas companies invested \$115 billion in fossil fuels.” CBS News. March 25, 2019. <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/paris-climate-agreement-top-oil-and-gas-companies-spent-110-billion-on-fossil-fuel-investments/>

2. Banking on Climate Change: Fossil Fuel Report Card, 2019. <http://www.ieneearth.org/banking-on-climate-change-fossil-fuel-report-card-2019/>

The NAACP's mission is to uphold and defend civil and human rights. Accordingly, we are duty-bound to confront corporations wielding power to manipulate systems and oppress communities to the detriment of the sustainability of the environment and the wellbeing of all life on earth. Even as we work with partners to advance sustainable and just policies and practices, we are compelled to expose the ways that the fossil fuel industry invests millions of dollars in undermining our civil rights agenda. They manipulate academia, politics, media, and our economy. We must break the tethers of puppetry that suppress democracy and hold sway over these key systems.

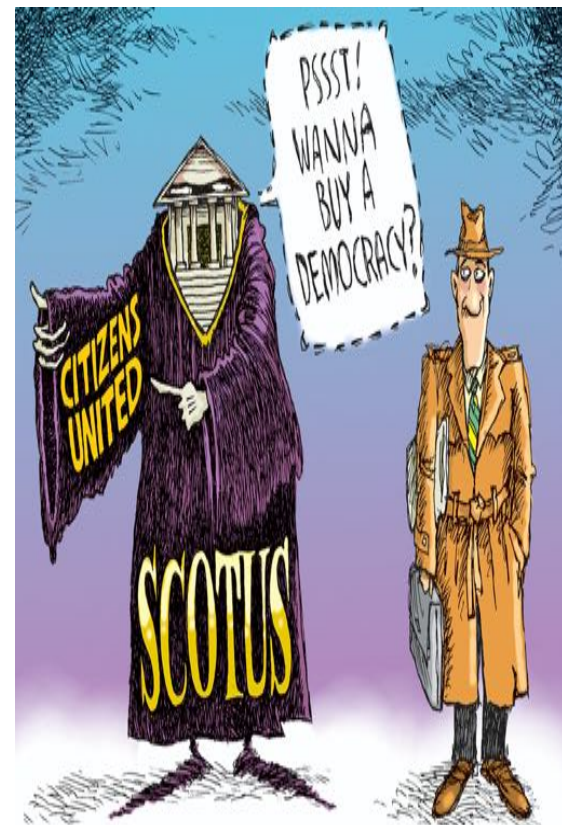
***Some, but not all, fossil fuel companies and most, but not all, fossil fuel trade associations, engage in these tactics!***

To this end we will equip our communities to recognize, be immune to, and ultimately defeat, the maneuvering of the fossil fuel industry. We must first educate ourselves, then strategize, and finally organize to shift power, literally and figuratively! Towards the education aim, we have assembled this list of 1) fossil fuel industry tactics for which we must be vigilant, 2) forces of domination we must actively dismantle, and 3) visionary methods of claiming energy sovereignty, community wealth, and true democracy. Other NAACP publications, such as our Power to the People Toolkit, listed in "Resources" in the appendix, provide more detailed guidance on the visionary methods introduced in this paper.

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## Top Ten Fossil Fuel Industry Tactics

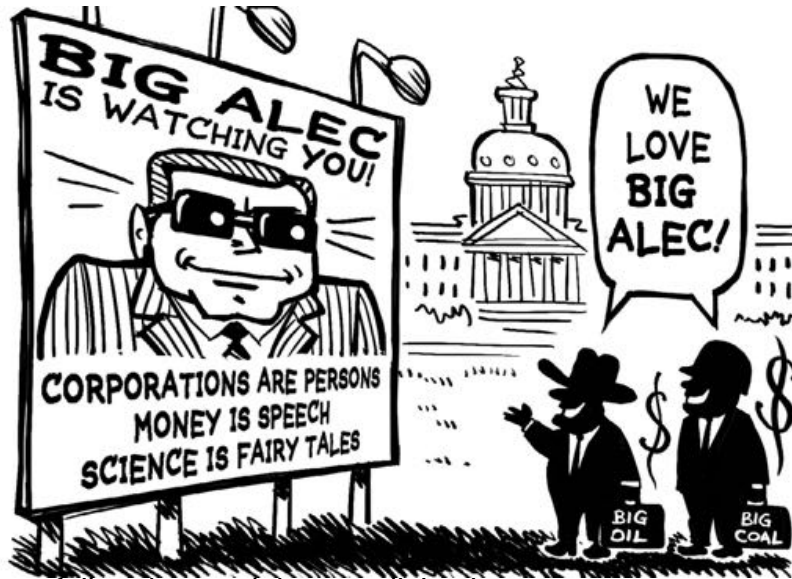
1. Invest in efforts that undermine democracy.
2. Finance political campaigns and pressure politicians
3. Fund scientists and scientific institutions to publish biased research studies.
4. Contend that government regulations hurt the economy, rate payers, and poor people.
5. Deny or understate the harms polluting facilities cause to people and the environment.
6. Deflect responsibility-- Shift blame to the very communities they pollute.
7. Exaggerate the level of job creation and downplay lack of quality and safety of jobs.
8. Pacify or co-opt community leaders and organizations and misrepresent the interests and opinions of communities.
9. Praise false solutions while claiming that real solutions are impractical or impossible.
10. 'Embrace' renewables, seek to control the new energy economy, and quell energy sovereignty.



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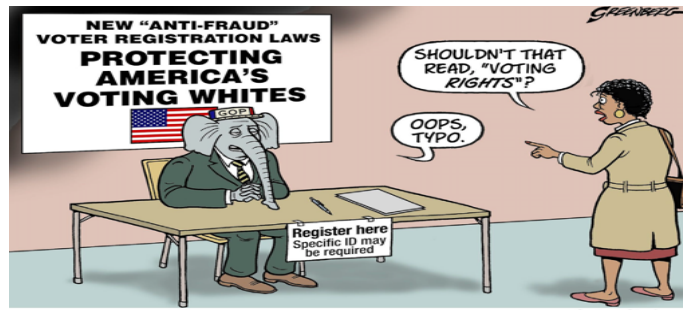
## Invest in Efforts and Institutions that Undermine Democracy

Fossil fuel companies including, Peabody Coal, Duke Energy, ExxonMobil, and, of course Koch Industries, have historically paid substantial membership dues to groups like the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC). ALEC develops model policies that result in voter suppression and manipulation.<sup>3</sup> From supporting voter ID laws to opposing public financing of elections, ALEC has heftily financed lobbying that has successfully advanced these policies into passage.



Suppression of votes from communities most impacted by fossil fuel pollution then paves the way for damaging policies. Their agenda includes policies against clean air, energy efficiency, clean energy, and energy sovereignty.

By investing in ALEC, members support a broad anti-civil rights policy agenda that includes school privatization, prison privatization, voter suppression, defunding unions, underfunding health care, and supporting stand your ground laws. Last year, a keynote speaker at one of ALEC's gatherings was David Horowitz who provided two speeches, including one that stated, "At the K-12 level, school curricula have been turned over to racist organizations like Black Lives Matter and terrorist organizations like the Muslim Brotherhood."<sup>4</sup>



In 2018, ExxonMobil opted not to renew its membership with ALEC, which many attribute to a disagreement regarding climate change policy and moves by others in ALEC's membership to have the government declare that climate change does not present a risk to human health.<sup>5</sup>

3. ALEC Corporations. Sourcewatch. 2019. [https://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/ALEC\\_Corporations](https://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/ALEC_Corporations)

4. Taylor, Chris. "ALEC gathering gives platform to hatermonger Horowitz." The Cap Times, August 2018. [https://madison.com/ct/opinion/column/rep-chris-taylor-alec-gather-ing-gives-platform-to-hatermonger-horowitz/article\\_3002a085-1320-5b70-a278-9b935fae106c.html](https://madison.com/ct/opinion/column/rep-chris-taylor-alec-gather-ing-gives-platform-to-hatermonger-horowitz/article_3002a085-1320-5b70-a278-9b935fae106c.html)

5. Crowley, Kevin and Natter, Ari. "Exxon Quits Koch-Backed Business Group after Row Over Climate Change." Bloomberg, July 2018. <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-07-12/exxon-quits-koch-backed-business-group-after-climate-change-row>



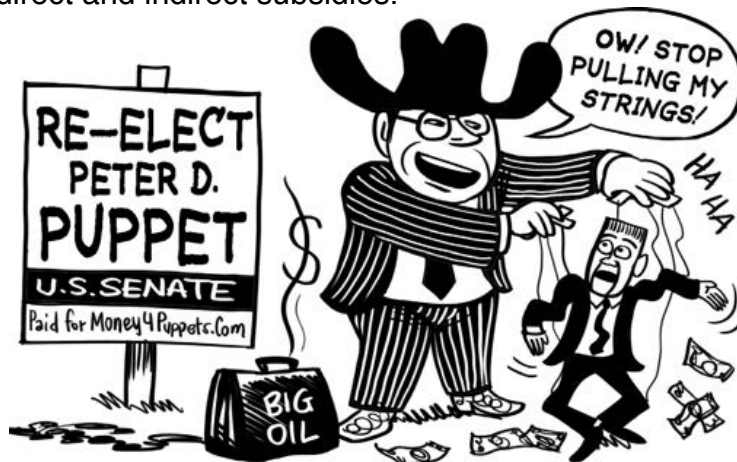
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## Finance Political Campaigns and Pressure Politicians

Fossil fuel companies, utilities, coalitions, and trade associations heavily invest in lobbying, many against environmental regulations and policies supporting energy efficiency and clean energy. With financial support from the fossil fuel industry, politicians actively support destructive energy practices like fracking, pipelines, and “clean coal.” While falsely claiming that they are environmentally safe, they exaggerate the value and volume of the jobs these practices create.

Since 1998, the utility industry spent \$2.4 billion on lobbying while the oil and gas industry spent \$2.1 billion. Southern Company leads the pack when it comes to utility company lobbying with \$12.3m in spending in 2018. PG&E, Edison Electric, American Electric Power, and Exelon round out the top 5 with combined spending of \$42m for all five companies in 2018.<sup>6</sup>

ExxonMobil and Koch Industries are the highest investors in lobbying among energy companies. Each spend more than \$8 million on lobbying per year. Other big lobbying spenders include Shell, Chevron, and BP, each spending between \$4 million and \$7 million per year.<sup>7</sup> For energy companies, political spending brings an astronomical return on investment, with companies making \$119 for every \$1 they spend on federal lobbying and campaign contributions. Taking 2013-2014 as an example, energy companies spent over \$350 million and received nearly \$42 billion in return.<sup>8</sup> This only accounts for U.S. subsidies. The International Monetary Fund estimates that the fossil fuel industry receives \$3.3 trillion in worldwide government subsidies per year, including direct and indirect subsidies.<sup>9</sup>



In 2010, the Supreme Court of the U.S. decided in *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission* that limiting the political spending of corporations would violate their constitutional right to freedom of expression. Many political commentators and legal scholars point to *Citizens United* as a landmark case that continues to strengthen undue corporate influence over our government.<sup>10</sup>

6. Open Secrets, Electric Utilities Industry Profile, 2018, <https://www.opensecrets.org/lobby/industries.php?id=E08>

7. The Center for Responsive Politics, "Lobbying Spending Database: Oil & Gas," 2016, <https://www.opensecrets.org/lobby/industries.php?id=E01>.

8. Oil Change International, "Fossil Fuel Funding to Congress: Industry influence in the U.S.," 2017, <http://priceofoil.org/fossil-fuel-industry-influence-in-the-u-s/>.

9. David Roberts, "IMF says global subsidies to fossil fuels amount to \$1.9 trillion a year ... and that's probably an underestimate," *Grist Magazine*, Inc., 2013, <http://grist.org/climate-energy/imf-says-global-subsidies-to-fossil-fuels-amount-to-1-9-trillion-a-year-and-thats-probably-an-underestimate/>.

10. Lewis Rice, "Faculty Viewpoints: After *Citizens United*," *Harvard Law Today*, 2012, <http://today.law.harvard.edu/faculty-viewpoints-after-citizens-united/>.

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## Fund Scientists and Scientific Institutions to Publish Biased Research Studies

A handful of fossil fuel companies have provided funding to scientists to produce biased data. This analysis is used to deny or understate the negative impacts of the fossil fuel industry, discredit the practicality and value of clean and renewable energy systems, or refute the very existence of climate change and the role of human activity in its proliferation. As a result, researchers from prestigious universities publicly support polluting energy production practices or oppose sustainability practices such as energy efficiency improvements and clean energy alternatives.



According to documents acquired by Greenpeace through the Freedom of Information Act, over the course of 14 years Dr. Willie Soon, a Smithsonian Staff Researcher at the Harvard-Smithsonian Centre for Astrophysics, received a total of \$1.25m from Exxon Mobil, Southern Company, the American Petroleum Institute (API) and the Charles G. Koch Foundation. In his research 'findings' Soon contends that greenhouse gas emissions do not cause climate change, but, instead, the sun does.



In a 2010 report, the Center for American Progress identified over 50 research agreements between universities and major energy companies, where the companies donated anywhere from \$1 million to \$500 million toward energy-related research. Among these, the Center found several cases where universities gave up majority control over the governing body responsible for directing the university's corporate research partnerships. There were a few cases where universities gave full control over the governing body to corporations. Examples abound of how this plays out in the advancement of climate denying research.

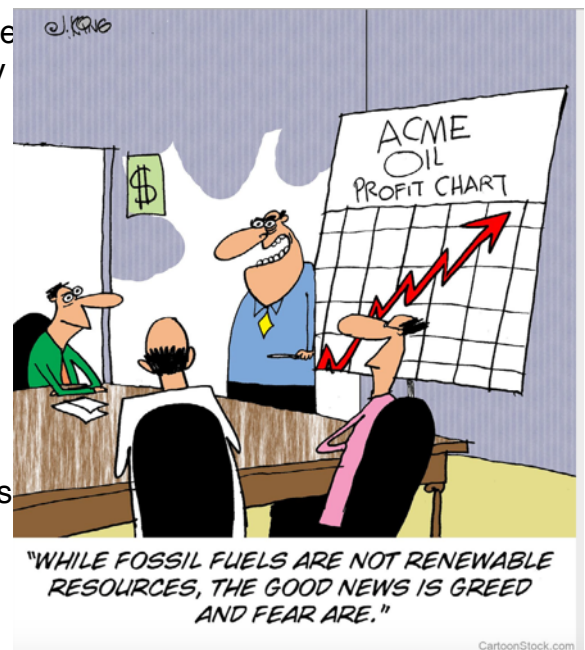
11. Goldberg, Suzanne. "Work by prominent climate change denier was funded by energy industry." The Guardian, 2015. <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2015/feb/21/climate-change-denier-willie-soon-funded-energy-industry>

For example, Colorado State University's (CSU) College of Natural Resources is named after alum Ed Warner, who invented fracking and leveraged his fortune to invest \$30 million into the college in 2005. In 2010, ExxonMobil gave \$5 million to CSU's Warner College of Natural Resources to study the impact of natural gas drilling on wildlife in northwest Colorado's Piceance Basin. Other companies such as Shell and BP also donated millions toward CSU's research.<sup>12</sup> These funding streams raise questions about the integrity of the college's research. CSU's studies have found that fracking in Colorado does not contaminate groundwater and that emissions from some stages of fracking is less harmful. In a well-known scandal in 2017, Exxon was found culpable of suppressing findings by their own scientists whose study results revealed a clear connection between human activity and the significant advancement of climate change.<sup>13</sup>

### Contend that Government Regulations Hurt the Economy, Ratepayers, and Poor People

Too many companies claim they cannot clean up their operations unless they drastically increase rates or cut thousands of jobs. Meanwhile, the fossil fuel industry makes enormous profits, reporting \$331 billion in profits annually, and awarding large compensation packages to their executives.<sup>14</sup> The highest 12 annual salaries of oil and gas CEOs are between \$1 million and \$13 million, with total annual incomes between \$15 million and \$142 million, including their entire compensation packages.<sup>15</sup> Coal company CEO compensation averages \$9m which is 289 times the rate of the average worker, which is \$33,840.

Examples of opposition to regulations include the report, "Fuel Economy Standards Are A Costly Mistake." The report was published by the Heritage Foundation, which is heavily funded by Koch Industries. Additionally, Conoco Phillips asserts, "Changing, excessive, overlapping, duplicative and potentially conflicting regulations increase costs, cause potential delays and negatively impact investment decisions, with great cost to consumers of energy."<sup>16</sup> In Rhode Island, multiple groups united around testimony in the legislature stating that Rhode Island's climate initiatives will hurt the economy, increase costs for ratepayers and slow job creation. The groups included fossil fuel companies, trade associations such as the American Petroleum Institute, and fossil fuel front groups with local sounding names like Rhode Islanders for Affordable Energy.<sup>17</sup>



12. Joshua Zaffos, "Oil and gas companies pour money into research universities," High Country News, 2013, <http://www.hcn.org/issues/45.1/oil-and-gas-companies-pour-money-into-research-universities>.

13. Schwartz, John, Exxon Misled the Public on Climate Change, Study Says. New York Times August 23, 2017 <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/23/climate/exxon-glob-al-warming-science-study.html>

14. Shakuntala Makhijani, "Profits for Oil, Gas & Coal Companies Operating in the U.S. and Canada," Oil Change International, 2013, <http://priceofoil.org/2013/09/26/prof-its-oil-gas-coal-companies-operating-u-s-canada/>.

15. Thomas Miller, "The Highest Paid Oil & Gas CEOs," OilPrice.com, 2015, <http://oilprice.com/Energy/Energy-General/The-12-Highest-Paid-Oil-Gas-CEOs.html>.

16. Furth, Salim, "Fuel Economy Standards are a Costly Mistake." Heritage Foundation. March 4, 2016. <https://www.heritage.org/government-regulation/report/fuel-econo-my-standards-are-costly-mistake>

17. Carini, Frank. "Out of State Fossil Fuel Money Spilled Across RI to Fight Climate Action." ecoRI News. May 3, 2018. <https://www.ecori.org/green-opinions/2018/5/2/out-of-state-fossil-fuel-money-spilled-across-ri-to-fight-climate-action>



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## Deny or Understate the Harms Polluting Facilities Cause to People and the Environment

Too many fossil fuel companies and their advocates deny the existence of climate change. When they admit that climate change exists, they tend to deny that it is a problem or claim that the use of fossil fuels is not to blame for it. Generally, fossil fuel advocates attempt to make the case that the benefits of using fossil fuels far outweigh the harms.



For example, Alex Epstein, author of “The Moral Case for Fossil Fuels” and founder of a for-profit “think tank” called the Center for Industrial Progress, makes several arguments to romanticize the fossil fuel industry and vilify advocates for environmental, climate and energy justice. Epstein makes the argument

that the rise of fossil fuels has led to better air quality, increased life expectancy, rising incomes, and better access to clean drinking water. He claims that we have the fossil fuel industry to thank for these advancements. He also makes an argument that scientific models of climate change have failed to make accurate predictions and are therefore not to be trusted.<sup>18</sup>

Belying the notion of confidence in lack of harm caused by their facilities, the Southern Company was fined \$145,000 by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission when they were found culpable of falsifying records and faking inspections at Plant Vogtle in Savannah, Georgia. A statement from the commission said some 13 workers at the site “did not complete required rounds to check equipment and plant conditions, but provided inaccurate documentation indicating that they had done so.”<sup>19</sup> Relatedly, the Office of Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) ruled that a former Southern Company engineer faced “a continuing pattern of retaliatory treatment” after he reported safety concerns and falsification of operational reports at the company’s troubled “clean coal” Kemper Carbon Capture and Sequestration Project.<sup>20</sup>



“FIRST WE HAVE TO CONVINCE THE PEOPLE THAT GOOD HEALTH ISN'T EVERYTHING.”

CartoonStock.com

18. Rob Hopkins, “Review: ‘The Moral Case for Fossil Fuels’ – Really?,” United Nations University, 2015, <https://ourworld.unu.edu/en/review-the-moral-case-for-fossil-fuels-really>.

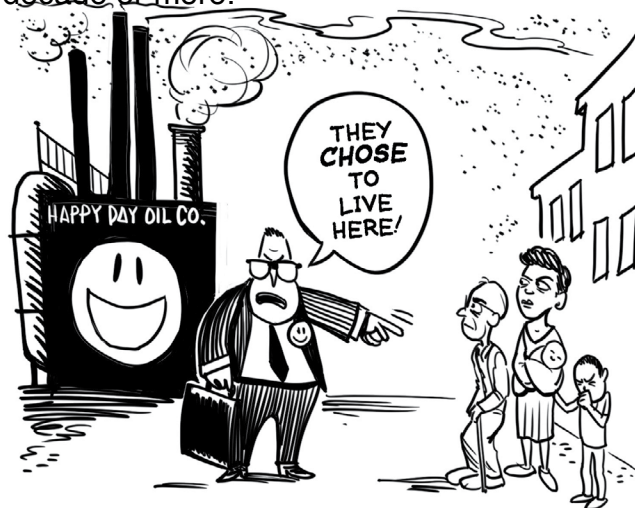
19. Ondieki, Anastacia. “Southern Company Faces Fine for Faking Inspections at Plant Vogtle.” The Atlanta Journal Constitutional. February, 2018. <https://www.ajc.com/news/local-govt--politics/southern-company-faces-fine-for-faking-inspections-plant-vogtle/mHeOGiXq5JcviSY0BFkq0N/>

20. Amy, Jeff. “Fired Engineer sues, saying Southern Company retaliated over Kemper County power plant concerns.” August 2017. <https://www.clarionledger.com/story/news/2017/08/08/kemper-co-power-plant-engineer-lawsuit/550319001/>

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## Deflect Responsibility—Shift Blame to Communities They Pollute

Fossil fuel companies often deny responsibility for the disproportionate impact of polluting facilities on lower-income communities and communities of color. They claim that, in most cases, the facilities were built first, and communities knowingly developed around them. However, studies analyzing demographic changes in these areas show this is not true. In fact, polluting facilities and hazardous waste sites have frequently been built in transitional neighborhoods, where wealthier white residents were gradually moving out and lower-income people of color had begun moving in for a decade or more.



Affluent white communities are often more able to leverage their greater resources to resist the siting of polluting facilities near their homes. Companies tend to take the path of least resistance and target lower-income communities and communities of color for the placement of these facilities. Communities in transition are particularly vulnerable due to their relative lack of social cohesion and political influence. Transition reduces the likelihood that well-functioning neighborhood associations and civic organizations are present in the

community. This makes transitional communities prime targets for the siting of polluting facilities.<sup>21</sup>

## Exaggerate the Level of Job Creation and Downplay Lack of Quality and Safety of Jobs

Often fossil fuel companies praise themselves for creating jobs and contributing to the growth of the U.S. economy as well as the economic development of communities. They use their job creation as a justification for sidestepping regulations and acquiring publicly funded subsidies to support the cost of their polluting development projects. Some important considerations that energy companies often neglect to acknowledge pertain to the quality of the jobs they create rather than the quantity. Jobs created by the fossil fuel industry pay less than new energy economy jobs and involve high rates of exposure to toxins.



21. Mike Gaworecki, "Minority And Low-Income Communities Are Targeted for Hazardous Waste Sites, Research Confirms," Desmog, 2016, <https://www.desmogblog.com/2016/01/22/minority-and-low-income-communities-are-targeted-hazardous-waste-sites-research-confirms>.

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The Keystone Pipeline, Atlantic Coast Pipeline, Bayou Bridge Pipeline, and the list goes on, all come with promises of jobs, economic boom for the region/communities, etc.<sup>22</sup> However, they failed to specify that most of the jobs were very short term, high risk construction jobs that would last mere months. Similarly, Elouise Brown of Shiprock, NM speaks of how coal plant companies convinced Navajo leaders to welcome the polluting facilities by promising jobs that ultimately didn't materialize because there were fewer jobs than promised and the handful of associated jobs, were already filled instead of hiring local community members.



Additionally, the oil and gas industry is openly acknowledged as one of the most dangerous work sectors. Fatal injuries increased by 27 percent from 2013 to 2014, with 142 fatal injuries, making the rate nearly 16 deaths per 100,000 workers.<sup>23</sup> According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, since 1968, 76,000 coal miners have died of black lung disease,<sup>24,25</sup> while year after year, the National Mining Association has fought against stringent regulations that would have protected workers.<sup>26</sup> Interviewing an NAACP member in rural Indiana, she lamented the loss of her father who died of lung cancer after working in a coal plant for 15 years. She commented that "My father never smoked a day in his life."<sup>27</sup>

Image Credit: Bellrise.com



22. "Pipeline bakers make big promises about jobs, growth" FoxBusiness 2017. <https://www.foxbusiness.com/markets/pipeline-backers-make-big-promises-about-jobs-growth>  
23. National Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2017. <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/foi.pdf>

24. "MHA Issues Final Rule on Lowering Coal Miners' Exposure to Respirable Coal Dust." Department of Labor, 2014. <https://www.dol.gov/newsroom/releases/msha/msha20140669>

25. Berkes, Howard; Jingnan, Huo; Benincasa, Robert. "An Epidemic is Killing Thousands of Coal Miners. Regulators Could Have Stopped It." WAMU 88.5. December 2018. <https://wamu.org/story/18/12/18/an-epidemic-is-killing-thousands-of-coal-miners-regulators-could-have-stopped-it/>

26. Ward Jr, Ken. "Dust Reform stalled by years of inaction." Charleston Gazette-Mail, 2012. [https://www.wvgazette.com/news/special\\_reports/dust-reforms-stalled-by-years-of-inaction/article\\_64d26da0-83d1-595a-b097-414a251a35a0.html](https://www.wvgazette.com/news/special_reports/dust-reforms-stalled-by-years-of-inaction/article_64d26da0-83d1-595a-b097-414a251a35a0.html)

27. Coal Blooded: Putting Profits Before People Video. NAACP, 2012. <https://vimeo.com/24654578>

## Pacify or Co-opt Community Leaders and Organizations and Misrepresent the Interests and Opinions of Communities

Often, companies in the fossil fuel industry use this tactic to neutralize or weaken public opposition. At times, this takes the form of providing regular financial support to an organization/group without any explicitly stated ties to supporting an agenda. Over the years, the companies will regularly support local groups financially, have officials attend meetings and sometimes gain seniority in the membership of local groups, and even invite representatives of influential groups to serve on their boards of directors. All this relationship building results in a false sense of common cause and affinity. This is the approach most commonly used with NAACP units

The St. Louis, Missouri NAACP Branch enjoyed a longstanding relationship with Peabody Coal, which supported the branch financially, without any ask of the branch to support an agenda. However, one year, when the annual check for the Freedom Fund Banquet didn't come in the mail, the branch president reached out to the company. They replied with an explanation indicating, 'we only give money to our friends and your folks went down and talked bad about coal to the EPA.' And that was the end of their sponsorship of the great work of the NAACP St. Louis Branch.



More directly, there have been instances where community leaders and organizations are not persuaded by the industry's false claims about an issue. Then companies or private investors may offer communities money or gifts in exchange for their support or for their withdrawal from the fight altogether.

Recently, when lobbying to build a gas compressor station in a historically black community in Union Hill in Buckingham County Virginia, Dominion committed \$5m to expand emergency services and build a new community center. When the NAACP Virginia State Conference affirmed that this is the least they could do under the circumstances, their letter was then misrepresented as a reversal of the VA NAACP's staunch opposition to the compressor station. The VA NAACP was then compelled to strongly reassert their unequivocal position as being opposed to the compressor station. In its filing with the VA Air Pollution Control Board, the VA NAACP stated:

***"We have followed this permitting process closely and we remain deeply troubled by what appears to be a deliberate effort by the applicant, Dominion Energy, to erase the historic African American community of Union Hill from the record of consideration. "This oversized compressor station will be an industrial emitter in a nonindustrial area and will forever change the character of the community from a scenic and historic setting to industrial. There has been no consideration for maintaining the community's scenic aesthetics, nor pro-active mitigation efforts to prevent substantial degradation to air and water qualities. We ask the Air Pollution Control Board to vote No."***<sup>28</sup>

Along related lines, fossil fuel companies have established and/or supported the establishment of shell organizations with faces and voices of communities of color, to pedal their messaging. Through these efforts, companies also finance policy-based campaigns intended to misinform and manipulate voters.

28. "Virginia NAACP Files Powerful Comments on Dominions Proposed Union Hill Compressor Station." Blue Virginia, 2019. <https://bluevirginia.us/2019/01/virginia-naacp-files-powerful-comments-on-dominions-proposed-union-hill-compressor-station>



When solar power advocates in Florida launched the Floridians for Solar Choice ballot initiative to allow citizens of the state to purchase electricity from third-party solar companies without paying any upfront installation costs, energy companies launched a counter-campaign called “Consumers for Smart Solar.” This campaign demonized the ballot initiative, calling it misleading and dangerous to customers with lower incomes. They directly parroted the false narrative of the fossil fuel industry. They claim that solar is bad for poor people because the way net metering policies are structured, allowing solar installation owners to benefit from the grid and sell energy to the grid is characterized as a “subsidy for the rich.”<sup>29</sup>

Consumers for Smart Solar was funded primarily by major energy companies in the area, including Duke Energy, Florida Power and Light Company, Gulf Power Company, and Tampa Electric Company. They donated a combined \$6.8 million to the campaign to protect their control over the electric utility market in Florida.<sup>30</sup> Over the years, “Consumers for Smart Solar” has received nearly \$26 million dollars from utilities.

There are other examples of fossil fuel companies leveraging their wealth to create a false appearance of community support for the fossil fuel industry, or an appearance of community dismay for clean and renewable energy. Some political organizations that claim to represent the interests of people of color are funded by energy companies behind the scenes and their positions mirror the agenda of those companies.

The National Black Chamber of Commerce (NBCC) indicates on its website that members who contribute at least \$35,000 may join the organization’s Public Policy Council, which works to formulate positions on policies of various categories, including energy and environmental protection.<sup>31</sup> The NBCC, which has accepted over \$800,000 from ExxonMobil since 1998, has been outspoken against climate change mitigation agreements and policies, such as the Kyoto Protocol and the Environmental Protection Agency’s Clean Power Plan, claiming they are harmful to families with lower incomes, families of color, and small business owners of color. The organization has come under criticism for allegedly funneling money from the fossil fuel industry to political campaigns through its Free Trade Initiative, which had its 501(c)(4) status revoked by the IRS in 2014 for its failure to file tax forms disclosing information about its lobbying expenditures.<sup>32</sup>



29. Klas, Mary Ellen. “Florida voters say no to misleading amendment.” Miami Herald. November, 2016. <https://www.miamiherald.com/news/politics-government/election/article113449438.html>

30. Gabe Elsner, “Special Interests Behind Anti-Solar Ballot Initiative Consumers for Smart Solar,” Energy and Policy Institute, 2015, <http://www.energyandpolicy.org/special-interests-behind-anti-solar-ballot-initiative-consumers-for-smart-solar/>.

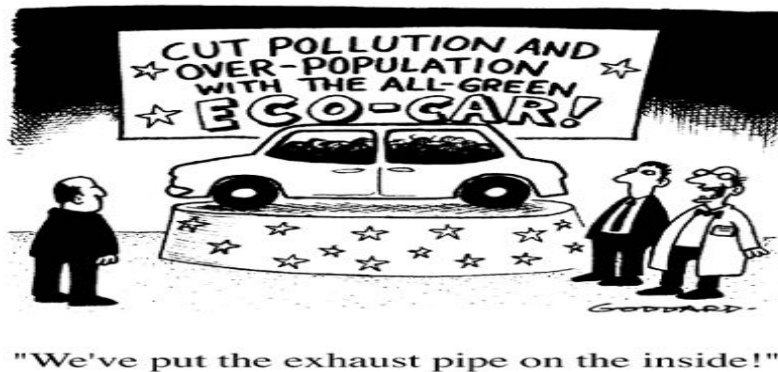
31. Energy and Policy Institute, “National Black Chamber of Commerce,” 2017, <http://www.energyandpolicy.org/national-black-chamber-of-commerce/>.

32. Matt Kasper, “Where is the National Black Chamber of Commerce getting its money to attack solar power in Florida? And is it breaking the law?,” Energy and Policy Institute, 2016, <http://www.energyandpolicy.org/national-black-chamber-commerce-irs-revoked-501c4/>.

Fossil fuel companies often point to examples of predatory financing agreements in the solar industry to support their argument that consumers are better protected when they get their electricity from major utility companies. Meanwhile, energy companies that use fossil fuels are always harmful to consumers, as their business model is rooted in keeping their customers dependent on them, limiting consumer choice, preserving their monopoly, and maximizing profit at the expense of the sustainability of our environment and the health and well-being of our families and communities.

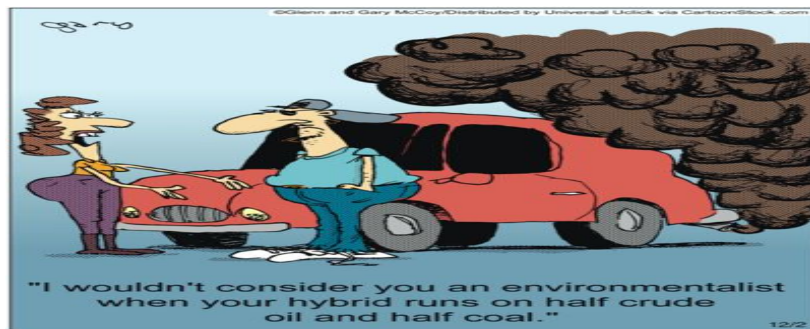
## Praise False Solutions While Claiming that Real Solutions are Impractical, Impossible, or Harmful for Poor People or Black People.

Deceptive fossil fuel companies present themselves as eco-friendly by making commitments to energy efficiency and “clean” energy production. This is meant to promote the misperception that these companies are doing everything they can to reduce harms to people and the environment, without substantially decreasing their profits or relinquishing any of their control over the industry.



CartoonStock.com

Companies may call attention to technological updates in their facilities that bring relatively modest improvements in air quality. Pollution control devices, for example, are limited in that they are usually designed to reduce only one of many pollutants, which contributes to higher costs as multiple pollutants are mitigated.<sup>34</sup> Furthermore, pollution control devices often cause increased carbon dioxide emissions, consume additional water, and lead to thermal discharge and ash disposal problems.<sup>35</sup>



CartoonStock.com

Similar to President Donald Trump who famously said, “I just left Montana, and I looked at those trains and they’re loaded up with clean coal — beautiful clean coal.” many in the fossil fuel industry also promote the myth that coal can be a source of clean energy, through ‘carbon capture and sequestration’ as companies refer to their intent to become more environmentally sustainable.

33. Matthew Campbell, Tara Patel and Alex Morales, Threatened By Renewable Energy, Fossil Fuel Companies Highlight Their Role in Alleviating Poverty. Bloomberg, 2014. <https://www.renewableenergyworld.com/news/2014/12/threatened-by-renewable-energy-fossil-fuel-companies-highlight-their-role-in-alleviating-poverty.html>

34. John Shenot, "Quantifying the Air Quality Impacts of Energy Efficiency Policies and Programs," The Regulatory Assistance Project, 2013, <http://www.raponline.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/rap-shenot-eedataforairregulatorfinal-2013-aug-13.pdf>.

35. Chris James, Chris Neme, Jim Grevatt, and Ken Colburn, "Reducing Greenhouse Gases and Improving Air Quality Through Energy Efficiency Power Plants: Cutting Through the Fog to Help Air Regulators 'Build' EPPs," The Regulatory Assistance Project, 2016, <http://www.raponline.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/rap-efc-cuttingthroughthefog-aceeesummerstudy-2014-aug.pdf>.

36. Matthew Campbell, Tara Patel and Alex Morales, Threatened By Renewable Energy, Fossil Fuel Companies Highlight Their Role in Alleviating Poverty. Bloomberg, 2014. <https://www.renewableenergyworld.com/news/2014/12/threatened-by-renewable-energy-fossil-fuel-companies-highlight-their-role-in-alleviating-poverty.html>

***“The best way to reduce carbon and further human development is to accelerate use of today’s advanced coal technologies,”***

***Chris Curran, a Peabody spokesman, said in an e-mail.<sup>36</sup>***

Fossil fuel companies often spread misconceptions about clean and renewable energy systems and their viability, such as the idea that solar power cannot meet our energy production needs because of cloud cover, nightfall, and geographic variances in sunlight intensity. Or they will say that wind power cannot meet our needs because certain locations are not windy enough and long-distance energy transmission is unaffordable. And, as stated, the messages are often that poor people or African Americans will be harmed, economically, in the transition to a clean energy economy.

A North Carolina minister and an environmental watchdog sent a letter to Duke Energy President and CEO Lynn Good, criticizing the utility giant for targeting African-American community leaders as part of its campaign against rooftop solar. Rev. Nelson Johnson, pastor of the predominantly African-American Faith Community Church and executive director of the Beloved Community Center, both in Greensboro, co-wrote the letter with Jim Warren, executive director of the Durham-based NC WARN environmental nonprofit:<sup>37</sup>

“As pastor of a predominantly African-American church in Greensboro, I (Rev. Nelson Johnson) have been visited in recent months by three different individuals selling Duke’s “solar power hurts the poor” message. The claim is that the poor are left to subsidize more affluent customers who can buy rooftop solar power systems -- because the non-solar customers are left to pay more than “their share” for Duke Energy’s large, expensive power plants. It appears evident that this “solar hurts the poor” strategy has been coordinated by Duke and its cohorts in the corporate electric power industry and used in many states recently. Fortunately, the scheme has been rejected by the NAACP’s national board, by various state NAACP chapters, and by the Congressional Black Caucus, among others. Nevertheless, Duke Energy is vigorously pursuing this same deception in North Carolina. This cynical corporate activity is an affront to the people of this state, and it is your personal responsibility to stop it.

We also have learned that your lobbyists are spreading the same “solar hurts the poor” message with the Legislative Black Caucus. Yet, with GOP legislators, you are altering the message to say that rooftop solar harms businesses. Both presentations serve the purpose of confusing the public and distorting the truth.”



37. Sturgis, Sue. "Duke Energy called out for targeting black community with 'cynical' anti-solar campaign" Facing South, 2015. <https://www.facingsouth.org/2015/04/duke-energy-called-out-for-targeting-black-communi.html>



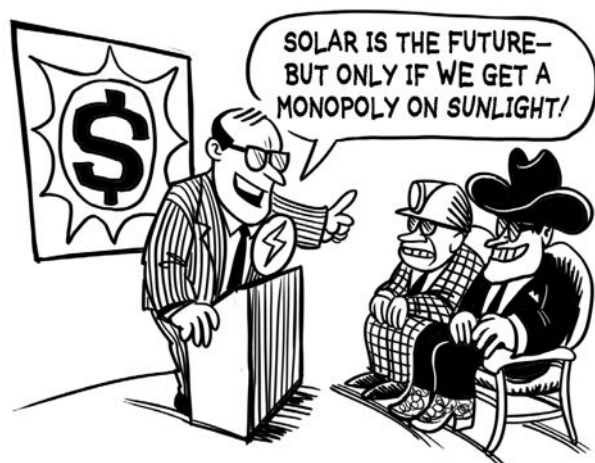
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## ‘Embrace’ Renewables, Seek to Control the New Energy Economy, and Quell Energy Sovereignty

While utility companies are beginning to accept the inevitable market shift towards renewable, obey renewable portfolio standards, and pivot towards increasing use of clean energy, too many are also turning the same domination and control tactics towards maintaining their reign over the new energy economy.

Milwaukee’s Public Works Committee advanced a resolution in February to construct up to .21 megawatts of solar systems on three of the city’s libraries, rebuffing efforts by the monopoly utility company We Energies to be the city’s sole option when it comes to using solar power.<sup>38</sup> The committee’s approval came after months of efforts by city officials to turn to the open market for much larger solar investments that We Energies has blocked at every turn.<sup>39</sup>

Just as fossil fuel companies are fighting tooth and nail against regulations when it comes to pollution control, they are fighting deregulation just as fiercely when it comes to giving consumers choices over where to get their energy.



In Florida, the fight is already heating up over a 2020 Ballot Initiative, “Right to Competitive Energy Market for Customers of Investor-Owned Utilities; Allowing Energy Choice.” Consumer groups are being encouraged to oppose the legislation with now age-old dire warnings that rates will go up if such a measure is imposed. Once again, utility companies are using an equity frame to pressure groups into championing their continued monopoly of the energy sector.

Utility companies are also pushing for exorbitant surcharges for anyone who is not buying solar directly from them. Again, using the “equity” frame in so doing, they claim that providing a rebate/credit to those who generate more energy than they use amounts to being a “subsidy for the rich” while poor people are left to pay for the “stranded assets” of the polluting fossil fuel infrastructure.

ALEC has a “model policy” on net metering which purports to support solar while making any independent generation of energy by anyone other than utility companies as restrictive as possible.<sup>40</sup> Groups like Edison Electric Institute have approached the National Black Caucus of State Legislators (NBCSL), the National Policy Institute (NPI), UNIDOS, and the Congressional Black Caucus about supporting resolutions with the ALEC generated language and they were even successful in getting NPI and NBCSL to pass resolutions that were based on many of the same assertions as the ALEC model resolution.<sup>41</sup>

38. Kasper, Matt. “City of Milwaukee invests in its own solar, rejects We Energies’ offer for now as councilors express ire with utility’s efforts to stifle market.” Energy and Policy Institute. February 2019. <https://www.energyandpolicy.org/milwaukee-invests-in-its-own-solar-rejects-we-energies-offer/>

39. Lydersen, Kari. “City and WE Energies in Solar Standoff.” January 2019. <https://urbanmilwaukee.com/2019/01/25/city-and-we-energies-in-solar-standoff/>

40. Surgery, Nick. “Utility Trade Group Funds ALEC Attack on Americans Using Solar.” Center for Media and Democracy’s PR Watch. 2014. <https://www.prwatch.org/news/2014/07/12553/utility-trade-group-funds-alec-attack-americans-who-use-solar>

41. Mock, Brentin. “Clean Energy Advocates Need to Speak Up if They Want Black Politicians to Hear Them.” Grist, 2014. <https://grist.org/politics/clean-energy-advocates-need-to-speak-up-if-they-want-black-lawmakers-to-hear-them/>



# The Real Facts About the Imperative To Transition to a New Energy Economy

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## Fossil Fuel Emissions Kill—Especially Communities of Color, Indigenous Communities, and Low-Income Communities

Coal is the heaviest polluting and most lethal energy source, providing 40% of the world's electricity and producing 39% of global carbon dioxide emissions. The extraction of coal kills thousands and the burning of coal kills several thousands more.<sup>42</sup> The National Research Council calculates that air pollution from U.S. coal-fired power plants alone causes approximately 1,530 preventable deaths each year, and results in \$62 billion in total damages per year, including the cost of healthcare for people exposed to the toxins emitted by the extraction and use of coal.<sup>43</sup> As our Coal Blooded report affirms, African Americans are more likely to live near coal fired power plants, African American children are 2-3 times likely to die of an asthma attack while African American men are more likely to die from lung disease and less likely to smoke. Estimates of the total number of Americans killed each year by all energy industry air pollution reach about 63,000, with \$600 billion in annual damages projected by 2050.<sup>44</sup> As energy companies are very rarely held legally accountable for these damages, these costs are passed on to medical patients, their families, and taxpayers generally.

## Communities of Color Carry the Burden of Fossil Fuel Pollution, But Few Economic Benefits

A recent study in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences found that African Americans and Latinx persons are most likely to breathe toxic air and less likely to produce it.<sup>45</sup> Though studies show that the facilities are most likely to be located in our communities, research findings by the American Association of Blacks in Energy(AABE) conclude that we are less likely to access energy jobs or resources from the energy sector. Our relationship with the fossil fuel sector is much more that of the sector extracting from us in exceedingly harmful ways than benefiting us. According to AABE, out of this \$6 trillion annual industry, African Americans contribute \$41 billion but only hold 1.1% of energy jobs and we gain less than 1% of the revenue from the energy sector.

## Clean Energy Can Power Our Nation

Over 95% of the energy needed in the U.S. can be produced with solar and wind technology, with the remaining 5% produced with geothermal, wave, tidal, and hydroelectric systems. The energy produced with these clean and renewable systems would be more affordable than fossil fuel energy for a few reasons: 1) Energy produced by the fossil fuel industry becomes more expensive over time, as costs increase for mining, transporting, and processing fuels, not even including the social, health and other costs. 2) Clean and renewable energy systems have zero fuel costs; 3) The cost of operating clean and renewable systems would decrease over time as technological improvements are made, and as manufacturing and project deployment becomes less expensive due to increased economies of scale or production.<sup>46</sup>

42. Michelle Nijhuis, "Can Coal Ever Be Clean?," National Geographic, 2014, <http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/2014/04/coal/nijhuis-text>.

43. Environmental and Climate Justice Program, "Coal Blooded Report," National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, 2004, [http://action.naACP.org/page/-/Climate/Coal\\_Blooded\\_Executive\\_Summary\\_Update.pdf](http://action.naACP.org/page/-/Climate/Coal_Blooded_Executive_Summary_Update.pdf)

44. Mark Z. Jacobson et al., "100% clean and renewable wind, water, and sunlight (WWS) all-sector energy roadmaps for the 50 Unites States," Energy and Environmental Science, 2015, <http://web.stanford.edu/group/efmh/jacobson/Articles/I/USStatesWWS.pdf>.

45. Borenstein, Seth. Blacks, Hispanics Breathe More Pollution Than They Make, ABC News March 11, 2019 [https://abcnews.go.com/Technology/wireStory/blacks-hispanics-breathe-pollution-make-61612116?cid=clicksource\\_79\\_null\\_articleroll\\_hed](https://abcnews.go.com/Technology/wireStory/blacks-hispanics-breathe-pollution-make-61612116?cid=clicksource_79_null_articleroll_hed)

46. Mark Z. Jacobson et al., "100% clean and renewable wind, water, and sunlight (WWS) all-sector energy roadmaps for the 50 Unites States," Energy and Environmental Science, 2015, <http://web.stanford.edu/group/efmh/jacobson/Articles/I/USStatesWWS.pdf>.

## Clean Energy Has Health, Economic, and Environmental Benefits

Converting the U.S. to 100% clean energy by 2050 would: 1) Prevent the deaths of approximately 63,000 Americans who are killed by air pollution each year and prevent \$600 billion per year in related damages; 2) Eliminate the U.S.'s production of greenhouse gases, which is projected to cause \$3.3 trillion per year in damage associated with climate change by 2050; 3) Create a total of 6 million jobs lasting 40 years, which is greater than the 4 million jobs currently created by the fossil fuel industry; Create a savings of \$10,060 per year for each person in the U.S., with \$260 saved on energy costs, \$1,500 saved on healthcare, and \$8,300 saved on climate change adaptation costs annually.<sup>47</sup>



## The New Energy Economy Creates Good, Safe Jobs with Less Investment

The truth is that we can create safe, permanent jobs that pay well and do not harm people and the environment. We can do this by reversing the grip the fossil fuel industry has on the power grid and evolving toward locally owned clean and renewable energy systems. According to the 2019 Clean Jobs America analysis of energy jobs data, clean energy jobs totaled more than 3.26 million at the end of 2018. These jobs outnumber fossil fuels jobs nearly three to one (3.26 million to 1.17 million).<sup>48</sup>

Clean energy jobs also pay more on average than the national median and are located across the country from the coasts to rural communities and in the Rust Belt.<sup>49</sup> Median salaries for clean energy jobs are \$7,727 higher than median wages across the broader energy economy. Furthermore, green jobs have proven to be more stable during economic recessions.

From 2008 to 2010, while the average growth of the U.S. economy was 4.2%, the clean energy economy grew nearly twice as fast, by a rate of 8.3%. Creating green jobs is also more affordable to our federal government, which provides grant funds for the construction of energy producing facilities. For every one million of our federal tax dollars spent on green energy projects, about 17 jobs are created. Meanwhile, only about 5 jobs are created for every 1 million dollars in federal taxes spent on fossil fuel industry projects. In other words, over 3 times as many jobs can be created in a green energy economy than in the fossil fuel industry at the same cost.<sup>50</sup> Spending federal funds on creating only green energy jobs could lower the unemployment rate or make a substantial portion of our tax dollars available for other government expenditures, such as public services that are directly beneficial to individuals, families, and communities.

47. Bjorn Carey, "Stanford engineers develop state-by-state plan to convert U.S. to 100% clean, renewable energy by 2050," Stanford News Service, 2015, <http://news.stanford.edu/pr/2015/pr-50states-renewable-energy-060815.html>.

48. E2 Clean Jobs America Report. 2019. <https://www.e2.org/reports/clean-jobs-america-2019/>

49. The 2019 US Energy and Employment Report. <https://www.usenergyjobs.org/>

50. Adam James, Jorge Madrid, and Bracken Hendricks, "Green Jobs Reality Check: Clean Energy Still Means More and Better Jobs for American Workers," Think Progress, 2011, <https://thinkprogress.org/green-jobs-reality-check-clean-energy-still-means-more-and-better-jobs-for-american-workers-79cd441cda26#.tgcqi79p0>.

## Transitioning to a New Energy Economy is The Only Real Solution

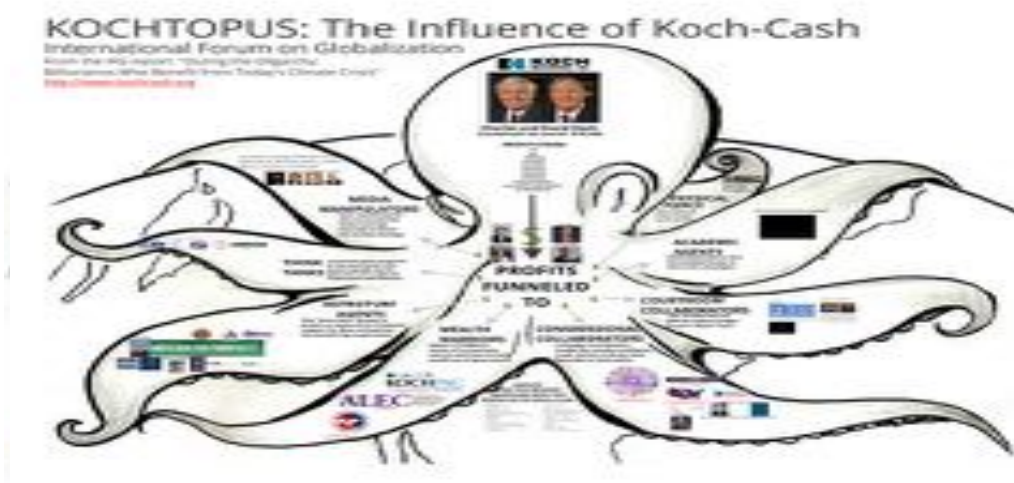
Many regulators consider increasing energy efficiency in utility-owned infrastructure to be a more viable air quality improvement strategy. The basic concept is that energy efficiency reduces energy consumption, which reduces emissions as less energy is produced. However, air quality, energy efficiency, and system reliability can only be optimized through a full-scale conversion to locally owned clean and renewable energy systems. Anything short of this conversion is a false solution that likely serves the interests of energy companies.

## What Do We Do? Stand Up! Fight Back!

### 10 Ways Frontline Communities Can Advance the Shift to Energy Democracy

- 1. Stand United: Resist Co-Optation** - Use this list to be vigilant to the ploys of fossil fuel companies to manipulate our communities. Be creative in seeking resources for your work as there are more options out there than one may think. Finally, if you do take fossil fuel company money, don't allow it to sway you for standing up for justice for your community and don't allow them to use your name or reputation as a cover or legitimization for their deeds.
- 2. Shift the Narrative** - Speak your truth, whether it's about how you are impacted by fossil fuel pollution, how you've been subjected to one of the 10 manipulation tactics, how you've resisted, or how you have begun to pave the way to a new energy economy!!
- 3. Community Based Participatory Research** - Collaborate with groups such as OpenSecrets, Center for Responsive Politics, Center for Public Integrity, Energy and Policy Institute, Center for Media and Democracy, and others to investigate, monitor, and expose these tactics, as well as engaging in applied research to show how a new energy economy based on principles of cooperation, democracy and sovereignty benefits all!
- 4. Educate Our Selves-Educate Our Elected Officials** - Ensure that everyone you know is educated about the negative impact of fossil fuels, that everyone is inoculated against the manipulation of fossil fuel companies, and that communities and elected officials know the benefits and pathways to the new energy economy.

5. **Build the New** - Advance just and equitable policies, practices, and systems, including net metering policies, energy efficiency resource standards, renewable portfolio standards, consumer choice, community solar, fair chance hiring, and more and begin to be the change you want to see in the world by practicing energy efficiency or getting rooftop or community solar.
6. **Participate in the Process** - Go to local Zoning Board Meetings, Public Service Commission Meetings, City Council Meetings, State Legislative Hearings, or make calls, or write letters. Do whatever you can to lift your voice, tell your truth, and make demands in spaces where decisions are being made.
7. **Direct Engagement** - Negotiate with your utility and put forth your demands as a ratepayer that supports their operations or as an owner if you are a part of a co-op or as an organization representing consumer interests. Demand a shift from polluting practices and an expansion or switching to more offerings in energy efficiency and clean energy, as well as insisting that they do not block policies such as consumer choice, net metering, etc, that allow for shared ownership of our energy infrastructure. If all else fails, strategic communications and direct action!!
8. **Litigation/Legal Action** - If you are in a community suffering from pollution from a fossil fuel facility, seek legal counsel and determine if some form of legal action is advised symbolically or otherwise. Ensure that community benefits agreements are in place for any new development in our communities to ensure that community interests are upheld to the greatest extent possible.
9. **Reverse Citizen United** - Given that corporate power is enforced and supported in policies such as Citizen's United, consider action on removing this barrier to democracy!



**!!VOTE!!**

Get our communities to the poll to ensure that we vote on ordinances / policies / ballot initiatives that match our interests, get people into office who represent us, make sure candidates take the pledge to not accept fossil fuel money, and ensure that elected officials adhere to their campaign promises.



# Not Only Is an Energy Democracy Transition Possible, It's Already Happening!

## 1. Stand United—Resist Co-Optation

When Peabody Coal showed its colors by ending support of the St. Louis Branch of the NAACP when the NAACP advocated for stronger clean air regulations, the branch understood the invisible threads of conditionality that were imposed on their relationship. Sparked by the civil rights implications of such practices, the branch delved further into Peabody Coal's practices and ended up standing with union workers when their rights were being violated by Peabody Coal, as well as standing with Washington University student activists seeking to end the undue influence Peabody had over university decision making by ousting the Peabody CEO from the Board of Directors.

## 2. Community Based Participatory Research

NAACP partner on the Coal Blooded Report, the Little Village Environmental Justice Organization, partnered with the Harvard School of Public Health on a study which found that 40 asthma related deaths 550 ER visits and 2800 asthma attacks per year were attributed to the Fisk and Crawford Coal Fired Power Plants. These findings were instrumental in galvanizing community organization which ultimately resulted in the closure of these two plants.

## 3. Educate Ourselves-Educate Our Elected Officials

At the height of the well-funded attacks against distributed generation of electricity, the Climate Justice Alliance (CJA) assembled a working group, which included the NAACP, which collectively developed a Net Metering Toolkit to demystify this policy which ensures that people with solar installations who generate more energy than they use can be compensated for their contributions to the grid. This toolkit served as a primer for consumers and advocates, who, in turn, could educate their elected officials on this policy that is necessary to accelerate our transition to a clean energy economy.

In 2015 Indiana House Bill 1320, which sought to charge a fee for ratepayers with distributed energy generation through sources like rooftop solar, gained traction with the support of a coalition of corporate interests including utility companies and ALEC. By coopting the equity frame championed by energy justice advocates in earnest and twisting facts to spread misinformation, anti-solar interests also garnered support from National Blacks in Energy and the Congressional Black Caucus. In order to push back against the fossil fuel and utility company's public relations machine and defeat HB 1320, the Indiana NAACP changed the narrative surrounding distributed generation and rooftop solar, educated its membership which then educated their elected officials, and ultimately, the bill was defeated.

#### **4. Build the New Energy Economy—Advance Just and Equitable Policies, Practices, and Systems**

A critical component of the new energy economy is policymaking that supports collectivism and cooperative economics. In Maryland, a coalition of groups, including the Maryland State Conference of the NAACP educated themselves, the public, and their elected officials on the benefits of Community Solar. This resulted in success in the approval of the Community Solar Pilot Program, by the Maryland Public Service Commission.

In Minnesota, Interfaith Power and Light, Cooperative Energy Futures, Minneapolis NAACP, and others are working together to bring solar resources to communities. Last year, this group collaborated to establish the first community garden in North Minneapolis atop Shiloh Temple church, which provides enough electricity to power the church, neighboring Masjid An-Nur Mosque and 26 neighborhood households.

#### **5. Shift the Narrative on What's Possible**

By their very existence as an exemplar of what's possible, the Highland Park, MI's Soulardarity project is shifting the narrative on what's possible. DTE not only cut off their streetlights due to nonpayment due to the impoverished state of the township, they also had work trucks take away the street poles! But the community mobilized, organized and crowdsourced the finances they needed to buy new street poles and solar powered street lights and now they are back in the light again. They are leading by example and have created a fantastic video that is shown time and time again, to spread the vision of what can be done through the power of the people.

At NAACP's inaugural Energy Justice Training in June of 2016, Amy Mays, Environmental and Climate Justice Chair for Arizona riveted and inspired all in the room with her testimony of the possibilities for personal energy independence! Amy's electricity was shut off for non-payment and then the reconnection fees and deposits began to mount to such an extent that paying it all off was prohibitive. So she decided to save up the money she would have been paying to Arizona Public Service and over the course of two years, she bought solar panel after solar panel until she had enough to put together an array that would power her house. Then, using her own journeywoman's electrician's license, she installed the solar array on her rooftop and now her house is powered purely by the sun!

#### **6. Participate—Zoning Boards, Public Service Commissions, etc.**

In 2013, when Georgia Power set low ambitions for its expansion into solar, the Georgia Public Service Commission demanded that it boost its commitment to 525 MW of installed solar capacity by 2016. Such is the power of the public service commissions (PSC) and the importance of frontline community groups engaging in the meetings of the PSCs (also called public utility commissions in some states).

After Mississippi fell to the very bottom of the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy's State Energy Efficiency Scorecard ranking in 2012, in 2013, the MS Public Service Commission unanimously adopted statewide energy efficiency rules. Resulting from an intensive 3-year public participation process, the rules require the creation of utility-run energy efficiency programs. The rules are

expected to save consumers more than \$2.3 billion over the next 20 years and create 9,500 new jobs. Again, this is the power of consumer engagement in the decision-making process.

## 7. Direct Engagement

Over the years, the NAACP's Coal Blooded Report has challenged pollution from DTE's coal plants impacting people and planet as well as the DTE practices that have shut off electricity from impoverished customers in Detroit. Meanwhile, at the local level, the Detroit Metro Branch of the NAACP built a relationship which resulted in the branch being in a position to successfully advocate for customers in need who are facing shut offs, as well as ensuring that improved programming is in place to provide support for residential energy efficiency, and also supporting underrepresented students in STEM.

Ameren sought the support of the St. Louis Branch of the NAACP in pushing back on energy efficiency measures, claiming to be looking out for the interests of ratepayers on whom they were planning to shift costs. The NAACP St. Louis Branch President, Adolphus Pruitt, replied that in polling their membership, one grandmother on their board stated that if she had to pay more per month to keep her asthmatic grandbaby out of the emergency room, she would gladly do pay the price for her grandson's health. Ameren has since proposed increasingly ambitious energy efficiency plans.



In addition to strategies from passing local ordinances to community based participatory research, the Little Village Environmental Justice Organization engaged in both strategic communications and direct action in their community and in front of city hall! Similarly, hundreds of indigenous activists and allies jumped in boats, to protest arctic drilling through the Shell No and Idle No More Campaigns.



## 8. Litigation/Legal Action

The NAACP Gulfport, MS Branch of the NAACP stood with the MS Chapter of the Sierra Club as they ended a 6 year legal battle with the Mississippi Power Company(MPC) with an agreement that brings \$15 million in energy efficiency and clean energy investments to the state, sets the stage for homeowners to install solar power by ensuring that MPC would not continue lobbying against net metering, and requires power plants in Gulfport, Mississippi and Greene County, Alabama to stop burning coal over the next 20 months.

## 9. Reverse Citizen United

Move to Amend, with the tag line, “We the People, not We the Corporations”, is executing a nationwide grassroots campaign to educate and mobilize the public on what is meant beyond the deceptive moniker of “citizens united” and how people can organize to push back on this domination tactic by those seeking to establish corporate rule over our economy and replace democracy with corporatocracy! The NAACP is firmly aligned with imposing constraints on corporate personhood and influence on our political system.

## 10. Campaign Finance Reform

NAACP is a member of the Democracy Initiative, and the President and CEO serves on its Board of Directors. Thanks to the leadership and support Democracy Initiative, concrete steps like the 2015 measure for clean, accountable elections in Maine and democracy vouchers in Seattle, promote fair and just standards that eliminate barriers for people from all walks of life to run for office, not just a wealthy few. These reforms make a real impact on the lives of communities of color, young people, people with disabilities, and working people. For instance, Connecticut was the first state in the nation to require paid sick leave for most employees. The passage of that law followed closely on the adoption of a law to fund campaigns with small contributions only. According to the Democracy Initiative, “7 in 10 of all Americans - support campaign finance reform. If we all work together, we can shift the balance of our democracy back to the people and show our leaders that the best way to get elected is with our votes, not their money!”

**!!VOTE!!**

**Harness the power of civic engagement and voter mobilization!**

- In Portland, education and engagement of the public resulted in the passage of the Portland Clean Energy Ballot Measure to advance economic and environmental justice.
- In New York, the power of the people mobilized to upset entrenched incumbency and elect young, female, Latina leadership of Alexandra Ocasio Cortez whose visionary governance has already resulted in an aspirational conversation around a “Green New Deal”.
- In Mississippi and Texas, voter mobilization resulted in historic victories for a record number of black female judges thereby opening new possibilities for fairness in our judicial system.
- And the list goes on....

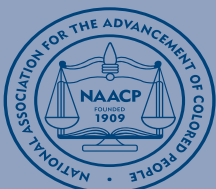




# List of Technical Resources

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- I. NAACP Environmental and Climate Justice Program Resources**
  - a. [Coal Blooded Report](#)
  - b. [Coal Blooded Action Toolkit](#)
  - c. [Engaging with Public Utilities/Public Service Commissions](#)
  - d. [Just Energy Policies Report](#)
  - e. [Lights Out in the Coal Report](#)
  - f. [Power to the People Toolkit—Just Energy Policies Action Toolkit](#)
  
- II. Organizations Exposing Fossil Fuel Machinations and Democracy**
  - a. [Center for Media and Democracy](#)
  - b. [Center for Public Integrity](#)
  - c. [Center for Responsive Politics/Open Secrets](#)
  - d. [Democracy Initiative](#)
  - e. [Energy and Policy Institute](#)
  
- III. Organizational Resources on Building the New Energy Economy**
  - a. [Center for Social Inclusion](#)
  - b. [Climate Justice Alliance](#)
  - c. [Institute for Local Self Reliance](#)
  - d. [Movement Generation](#)
  - e. [Movement Strategy Center](#)
  - f. [New Economy Coalition](#)



# NAACP