

## **Questions to Ask of Your Candidate(s) Regarding Climate Change**

### **1. Regards Pension Investments**

The Minnesota State Board of Investment (SBI) directs investments affecting roughly 500,000 state and local pensions of public employees. Nearly \$2.1 billion of SBI-controlled pensions are currently invested in fossil fuel companies. The Governor, the Attorney General, the Secretary of State, and the State Auditor are the four voting members of the SBI. They are advised by a leadership team, a large staff of investment officers and administrators, and some consultants. (See <http://mn.gov/sbi/Staff.html> for SBI staff list.)

*If you are successful and become Governor / Attorney General / Secretary of State / State Auditor, in your capacity as one of the four voting members of the SBI would you direct the SBI staff to evaluate the relative risks and benefits to state pension moneys because of investments in fossil fuels?*

*Would you also evaluate investment in clean energy (wind, solar, geothermal) as an alternative to replace fossil fuel investments?*

*Are you concerned for the longterm sustainability of these retiree pensions and do you believe that fossil fuel investments add extra risk?*

*Do you believe that the pension fund has a global responsibility to use investment to address climate considerations?*

### **2. Regards New York as a divestment model**

New York City and the State of New York have recognized the risk inherent in their fossil fuel investments within the state pension fund and have pledged to divest roughly \$5 billion. Minnesota is also heavily invested in fossil fuel companies, with \$2.1 billion at risk.

*As Governor / Attorney General / Secretary of State / State Auditor and therefore a voting member of Minnesota's State Board of Investment, would you consider following the Governor of New*

*York's example by pledging to divest Minnesota's \$2.1 billion of fossil fuel securities over the next five years?*

**3. Regards New York as a model for legal action against large fossil fuel companies**

New York City and the State of New York have taken legal action against five of the largest fossil fuel companies (BP, Chevron, Exxon, ConocoPhillips, and Royal Dutch Shell) for:

- a. emitting greenhouse gases that directly increase climate change;
- b. concealing for decades that industry-funded research confirms that fossil fuels produce emissions that adversely affect the earth's climate patterns; and
- c. funding misinformation to confuse and deny the existence of climate change and the impact of fossil fuel emissions upon the earth's climate.

*As Governor / Secretary of State will you consider advocating that Minnesota join New York's legal action against these companies? As Attorney General, will you consider joining New York's legal action?*

**4. Regards legislating a study to be conducted by the State Board of Investment**

*As a Legislative Candidate, do you support proposed legislation to direct the state Board of Investment to study the risks to Minnesota state pensions and risks to the earth's climate by continued support of fossil fuel investments?*

**5. Regards community methods of addressing climate hazards**

*As Mayor / Council Member / Advisor / Fellow Taxpayer, what methods do you believe your community should follow in lessening its vulnerability to adverse climate phenomenon?*

*This hand-out was developed and distributed by DivestInvest volunteers.  
To contact us for further information regarding pro-active use of pension investments to lower personal financial risk for government employees and address global climate hazards to wellbeing, email XXXXXX.*