

Proposed Business Resolution for the 2023 UUA General Assembly

“Complete Divestment from the Fossil Fuel Industry and Subsequent Reparations”

WHEREAS, we as Unitarian Universalists are grounded in love and guided by our fundamental principles that uphold the worth of every living being; call for justice in human affairs; support the right of conscience and the democratic process; support a world community with peace and liberty for all; declare respect for the interdependent web of existence; and dismantle racism and other oppressions, and

WHEREAS, the Earth’s systems among which we make our homes are threatened and destabilized by rising sea levels, warming average temperatures, the acidification of oceans, the depletion of nutrients in our soils, the pollution of land, air and water; and

WHEREAS, people living at the intersection of multiple systems of oppression, including people of color, poor people, disabled people, queer people and young people are disproportionately exposed and vulnerable to environmental injustice; and

WHEREAS, the impending and ongoing collapse of these ecological systems will fundamentally change the lives of our children, our children’s children, our children’s children’s children, and so on; and

WHEREAS, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has found that emissions of Carbon Dioxide contribute dominantly to global climate change, and

WHEREAS, greenhouse gasses are released “by burning fossil fuels and by certain industrial and resource extraction processes” such as fracking, offshore drilling, boring, and mining, and

WHEREAS, we are capable of accepting responsibility for our actions and making decisions that both align with our integrity and secure a just and livable future for coming generations; and

WHEREAS, the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) has a long history and a current practice of investing in stocks and bonds through the UU Common Endowment Fund (UUCEF), which includes the endowment funds of the UUA and of many UU congregations and affiliates, and

WHEREAS, the UUCEF is managed by the UUA Investment Committee, and the UUA Chief Financial Officer & Treasurer, under the advisement of the UUA Board of Trustees, and

WHEREAS, the guidelines for socially responsible investment of the UUCEF state that “The UUA seeks to avoid companies that... contribute in significant ways to climate change;” and

WHEREAS, in 2014, the UUA General Assembly voted in support of the Business Resolution on Fossil Fuel Divestment that “calls upon the UUA to cease purchasing securities of CT200 companies as UUCEF investments immediately” and “to continue to divest its UUCEF holdings of directly-held securities of CT200 companies, reaching full divestment of these companies within five years,” and

WHEREAS, divestment can be defined as, for the purpose of this business resolution, the public full sale of all securities in a company or industry for ethical reasons, and

WHEREAS, the 2014 Business Resolution also states that “the UUA may retain investments in CT200 companies in which it is engaged in shareholder activism seeking environmental justice or transition to clean and renewable energy,” and

WHEREAS, shareholder resolutions are non-binding suggestions that companies are not legally required to adopt even when passed by a majority of shareholders, and

WHEREAS, the UUCEF’s socially responsible investing guidelines states “The UUCEF also seeks to promote UU values, including environmental stewardship and social justice, through engagement with the management teams of companies whose securities it holds”, and

WHEREAS, despite the policy stating that the UUA may *retain* its investments in CT200 companies but will cease purchasing further securities, the UUCEF has purchased at least an additional 7,421 shares of ConocoPhillips stock since 2014, and

WHEREAS, despite the clear guideline to promote “environmental stewardship and social justice,” the UUCEF used its approximately \$537,320 investment in ConocoPhillips at the time of January 2021 to vote in favor of a purchase of over 200,000 acres of oil producing land in Texas, expanding Conocophillips oil production in order to increase its stock value and produce wealth, at the cost of the environmental and human impacts, and

WHEREAS, the 2014 Business Resolution only specified divestment from Carbon Tracker 200 (CT 200) companies, not the fossil fuel industry as a whole or its financiers, and

WHEREAS, the 2014 Business Resolution was a necessary and radical move towards fossil fuel divestment within our faith, yet it allowed the exceptions noted above (retaining investments in fossil fuel companies where the UUCEF is engaged in shareholder activism, and only calling for divestment from CT200 companies rather than the fossil fuel industry and its financiers), and

WHEREAS, these exceptions have been exploited by the Chief Financial Officer, and the investment committees of the UUCEF, under the advisement of the UUA Board of Trustees, to invest the funds of our congregations and the UUA into all aspects of the fossil fuel industry, including fossil fuel extraction, fossil fuel infrastructure, fossil fuel finance, and fossil fuel energy companies, and

WHEREAS, financial vehicles that include commingled funds [such as exchange-traded funds (ETFs), mutual funds, and hedge funds] do not report their investment portfolio, meaning a pooled fund might bear the name of a bank but be full of death-dealing fossil-fuel shares, and

WHEREAS, more than 75% of the fund is invested in these non-transparent pooled investment funds, and

WHEREAS, approximately 79% of these pooled investments do not have a socially responsible investing policy at all (which totals to slightly over 59% of the UUCEF's total portfolio), and

WHEREAS, as of June 30th, 2022, of the publicly visible investments that are directly managed by our financial faith leaders, the UUCEF holds an egregious number of shares across the fossil fuel industry, worth millions in value, and

WHEREAS, as of June 30th, 2022, the UUCEF holds an investment of \$844,394 in Conocophillips, a fossil fuel exploration and production company that is ever-expanding its operations, and produced approximately 1,567,000 barrels of oil and oil equivalents per day in 2021, with over 6,100,000,000 barrels of oil and oil equivalents in its reserves as of 2021, and

WHEREAS, as of June 30th, 2022, the UUCEF also holds an investment of \$143,108 in Marathon Oil Corporation, another major oil and gas exploration and production company, which drills for, buys, and sells oil and natural gas, holding over a billion barrels of oil and oil equivalents in its reserves as of 2021, and

WHEREAS, as of June 30th, 2022, the UUCEF holds an investment of \$126,192 in Marathon Petroleum Corporation, a subsidiary of Marathon Oil Corp which owns the largest oil refinement operation in the United States with the capacity to refine approximately 2,900,000 barrels of oil per day, and which also builds oil and gas transportation pipelines, and

WHEREAS, as of June 30th, 2022, the UUCEF also holds an investment of \$296,108 in Occidental Petroleum Corporation, another oil and gas exploration and production company, which has produced approximately 1,037,000 barrels of oil and oil equivalents per day in 2021, and holds over 3,500,000,000 barrels of oil equivalents in reserve as of 2021, and that also operates in the building of fossil fuel infrastructure, and

WHEREAS, as of June 30th, 2022, the UUCEF holds an investment of \$75,814 in Centennial Resource Development, another oil and gas production company, which has produced approximately 60,939 barrels of oil and oil equivalents per day in 2021, with 305,204,000 barrels of oil and oil equivalents in its reserves as of 2022, and

WHEREAS, as of June 30th, 2022, the UUCEF also holds an investment of \$103,836 in Valero Energy Corporation, an oil refinement and marketing company that imports hundreds of millions of barrels of crude oil a year for its 15 operating petroleum refineries and its diesel plants, and also builds fossil fuel infrastructure to transport oil and oil equivalents for sale, and

WHEREAS, as of June 30th, 2022, the UUCEF also holds an investment of \$31,128 in Chevron Corporation, another oil and gas exploration and production company which extracted approximately 3,099,000 barrels of oil from the land and sea per day in 2021, and holds over 11,000,000,000 barrels of oil equivalents in its reserves as of 2021, and

WHEREAS, as of June 30th, 2022, the UUCEF also holds an investment of \$18,205 in Murphy Oil Corporation, another oil and gas exploration and production company that on average produces 167,356 barrels of oil and oil equivalents per day through land and offshore drilling, with approximately 716,000,000 million barrels of oil equivalent reserves as of 2022, and

WHEREAS, as of June 30th, 2022, the UUCEF holds an investment of \$123,612 in Devon Energy Corporation, another oil and gas exploration and production company extracts approximately 572,000 barrels of oil and oil equivalents per day, and holds approximately 209,000,000 barrels of oil equivalents in its reserves as of 2022, and

WHEREAS, as of June 30th, 2022, the UUCEF holds an investment of \$21,976 in Vermilion Energy, another oil production and exploration company that extracted 84,417 barrels of oil equivalents per day in 2021, and which holds 302,092,000 barrels of oil equivalents in its reserves as of 2022, and

WHEREAS, as of June 30th, 2022, the UUCEF holds an investment of \$14,659 in Suncor Energy Inc, another oil and gas company which extracted on average 731,700 barrels of oil and oil equivalents per day in 2021, and which owns and operates Suncor Energy (U.S.A.) Pipeline Company, expanding destructive fossil fuel transportation infrastructure, and

WHEREAS, as of June 30th, 2022, the UUCEF holds an investment of \$7,451 in Exxon Mobil Corporation, another oil and gas company which extracted 2,289,000 barrels of oil and oil equivalents per day in 2021 and holds 18,536,000,000 barrels of oil and oil equivalents in its reserves as of 2022, and

WHEREAS, as of June 30th, 2022, the UUCEF holds an investment of \$5,645 in Ring Energy Inc, another oil and gas production and exploration company which extracted approximately 3,109,108 barrels of oil and oil equivalent per day in 2021, and which holds approximately 77,800,000 barrels of oil and oil equivalent in its reserves as of 2022, and

WHEREAS, as of June 30th, 2022, the UUCEF holds an investment of \$28,344 in SM Energy Co, another oil and gas production and exploration company, which extracted approximately 140,700 barrels of oil and oil equivalents per day in 2021, and which holds 492,000,000 barrels of oil and oil equivalents in its reserves as of 2022, and

WHEREAS, as of June 30th, 2022, the UUCEF holds an investment of \$58,392 in Halliburton, a hydrocarbon exploration company that operates in over 75 countries across the globe, and is responsible for the majority of the world's hydraulic fracturing (fracking) operations, which threaten contamination of water supplies, and

WHEREAS, as of June 30th, 2022, the UUCEF holds an investment of \$102,667 in Schlumberger, the world's largest offshore drilling company, which has a history of perpetuating human rights abuses linked to inserting mercenary security forces in foreign nations to secure its oil rigs, and

WHEREAS, as of June 30th, 2022, the UUCEF holds an investment of \$44,567 in ONEOK, a natural gas processing, extraction, and pipeline construction company, operating over 37,570 miles of natural gas pipelines, with an extraction and processing capacity of 1,700,000,000 cubic feet of Natural Gas per day as of 2022, and

WHEREAS, as of June 30th, 2022, the UUCEF holds an investment of \$98,582 in Kinder Morgan, which owns and operates over 83,000 miles of crude oil, gasoline, diesel, jet fuel, natural gas, and natural gas condensate gathering and transportation pipelines as of 2022, which it has continued to expand year after year, and

WHEREAS, as of June 30th, 2022, the UUCEF holds an investment of \$61,984 in Baker Hughes Company, one of the largest oilfields services companies engaging in offshore drilling, with 1,889 of its crude oil rigs as of October 2022, and

WHEREAS, as of June 30th, 2022, the UUCEF holds an investment of \$20,200 in Antero Midstream Corporation, a natural gas extraction and sales company that produced over 3,000,000,000 cubic feet of natural gas per day in 2021, which also builds and operates oil and gas pipeline infrastructure, and

WHEREAS, as of June 30th, 2022, the UUCEF holds an investment of \$11,457 in Targa Resources Company, a natural gas extraction processing and sales company that extracted 4,470,300,000 cubic feet of natural gas and 550,400 barrels of natural gas liquid per day in 2021, transporting it through approximately 4,900 miles of natural gas and natural gas liquid pipelines, and

WHEREAS, as of June 30th, 2022, the UUCEF holds an investment of \$42,961 in CNX Resources Corporation, a natural gas company engaged in hundreds of operations extracting shale and coalbed methane natural gas across hundreds of thousands of acres of land, and

WHEREAS, as of June 30th, 2022, the UUCEF holds an investment of \$56,324 in Alliant Energy Corporation, which derives approximately 64% of its revenue from coal and natural gas energy sales, and

WHEREAS, as of June 30th, 2022, the UUCEF holds an investment of \$149,317 in Atmos Energy Corporation, a natural gas and natural gas liquids only distribution company, which owns and operates 77,620 miles of natural gas pipelines throughout the United States, and

WHEREAS, as of June 30th, 2022, the UUCEF holds an investment of \$17,888 in Cenovus Energy Inc, an oil and natural gas company that builds and operates pipelines through Indigenous lands, and

WHEREAS, as of June 30th, 2022, the UUCEF holds an investment of \$53,421 in Centerpoint Energy Inc, an energy company deriving over 99% of its electricity sales from operating coal and natural gas plants, and

WHEREAS, as of June 30th, 2022, the UUCEF holds an investment of \$65,850 in Cheniere Energy Inc, the largest liquified natural gas seller in the United States which loaded 9,269,000 cubic meters of liquified natural gas for sale in 2021, and

WHEREAS, as of June 30th, 2022, the UUCEF holds an investment of \$15,536 in Crescent Point Energy Corporation, an oil and natural gas extraction company pumping hundreds of thousands of barrels of crude oil out of the land every day, and

WHEREAS, as of June 30th, 2022, the UUCEF holds an investment of \$52,640 in Duke Energy Holdings Corp, an energy company deriving the majority of its energy sales from fossil fuels, which leaked at least 11 metric tons of sulfur hexafluoride into the air in 2020, and

WHEREAS, as of June 30th, 2022, the UUCEF holds an investment of \$69,857 in Eversource Energy, an energy company that continues to use majority fossil fuels for its energy production and operates over ten thousand miles of natural gas pipelines across the U.S. through its subsidiaries, and

WHEREAS, as of June 30th, 2022, the UUCEF holds an investment of \$202,016 in NextEra Energy INC, an energy company which derives over 78% of its energy generation from fossil fuel resources, and

WHEREAS, as of June 30th, 2022, the UUCEF holds an investment of \$41,321 in DTE Energy Company, an electricity company deriving approximately 85% of its energy sales from fossil fuel sources, and

WHEREAS, as of June 30th, 2022, the UUCEF holds an investment of \$8,932 in NRG Energy Inc, an energy company that derives approximately 91% of its electricity generation from fossil fuels, and

WHEREAS, as of June 30th, 2022, the UUCEF holds an investment of \$203,675 in Dominion Energy Inc, which derives approximately 95% of its energy generation and sales from nonrenewable sources (one third natural gas, one third oil, and one third nuclear), and

WHEREAS, as of June 30th, 2022, the UUCEF holds an investment of \$562,937 in JP Morgan Chase, the world's largest financier of new fossil fuel projects, giving \$382,403,000,000 in loans to fossil fuel projects over the last five years, and

WHEREAS, as of June 30th, 2022, the UUCEF holds an investment of \$413,344 in Bank of America, which gave \$232,011,000,000 in loans to fossil fuel projects over the last five years, and

WHEREAS, as of June 30th, 2022, the UUCEF holds an investment of \$171,405 in Citigroup, a bank which gave \$285,370,000,000 in loans to fossil fuel projects over the last five years, and

WHEREAS, as of June 30th, 2022, the UUCEF holds an investment of \$181,936 in Morgan Stanley, a financial firm that has invested \$137,287,000,000 in the fossil fuel industry over the last five years, and

WHEREAS, as of June 30th, 2022, the UUCEF holds an investment of \$171,678 in Goldman Sachs, a financial firm that has invested \$118,976,000,000 in the fossil fuel industry over the last five years, and

WHEREAS, as of June 30th, 2022, the UUCEF holds an investment of \$9,227,550 in RBC Global Asset Management, a mutual fund managed by the Royal Bank of Canada, the 5th largest fossil fuel investor in the world, which invested \$201,229,000,000 dollars in the fossil fuel industry in the last five years, and

WHEREAS, despite the significantly larger numbers shown above, the minimum baseline for an individual stockholder to file a shareholder resolution is that they must be the beneficiary or owner of a mere \$2,000 of common stock and only need to have owned that stock for at least one year, and

WHEREAS, fossil fuel companies have historically demonstrated that they will not make decisions that harm their stock value or their ability to accumulate profit regardless of unethical conduct, and

WHEREAS, climate change activists within and outside of our faith tradition are urging individuals and institutions to ‘stop the money pipeline’ that supports expanding fossil fuel projects, and

WHEREAS, in 2020, the UUA General Assembly voted in favor of a business resolution on Embodying Human Rights in Our Investment Decisions, which stated "Unitarian Universalists should not support or profit from corporations that are deeply complicit in human rights violations," and

WHEREAS, fossil fuel extraction and production contributes to phenomenal loss of life for all human and non-human beings, including all plants, animals, insects and birds, forests, rivers, and oceans, fungi, bacteria, and the land itself, and

WHEREAS, this land belongs in ancestral and perpetual relationship to Indigenous peoples, nations and confederacies from whom it was stolen, and

WHEREAS, the UUCEF investments in the fossil fuel industry make our faith complicit in the physical, emotional, psychological, economic and ecological violence against Indigenous people and activists including people indigenous to southwest Asia and northern Africa, violence which is committed through police brutality against water protectors at Standing Rock and at Line 3, and through the degradation of land and destruction of natural resources, and

WHEREAS we are inspired by the witness and practice of faith communities such as the Presbyterian Church (USA), the United Church of Christ, the Quakers, and many Catholic dioceses, and

WHEREAS, our ecological futures depend on our collective capacity to practice social, political and economic models that prioritize life,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE 2023 GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE UUA calls upon the UUCEF to immediately divest from all fossil fuel companies, including the industries and financial institutions that support fossil fuel projects, and companies that build or own oil fields, companies involved in hydrocarbon exploration and the building of hydrocarbon exploration projects, fossil fuel pipeline builders and owners, and all fossil fuel financiers, including but not limited to all companies that were named in the above WHEREAS statements, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the UUCEF will cease purchasing securities of all fossil fuel companies, including the industries and financial institutions that support fossil fuel projects, and companies that build or own oil fields, companies involved in hydrocarbon exploration and the building of hydrocarbon exploration projects, fossil fuel pipeline builders and owners, and all fossil fuel financiers, including but not limited to all companies that were named in the above WHEREAS statements, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, this divestment and ceased purchasing of securities from industries named above will include the investments held in the separate shareholder advocacy holdings portfolio, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the UUA will remove all capital from all pooled funds that are unable to comply with this divestment policy, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the UUA will commission a study, done by a third party, to determine the cost and process of transitioning the entirety of the Common Endowment Fund out of nontransparent, commingled funds, which will be reported in full to General Assembly in 2024, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the UUCEF will return an equivalent value of the securities that were invested in fossil fuels as of June 30, 2022, or the total value of securities invested in fossil fuels at the time of the 2023 General Assembly of the UUA, whichever is greater, in the form of reparations to both the Indigenous tribes and communities who are the ancestral and continued stewards of this land, and the descendants of enslaved Black and Brown people that were forced to create the physical wealth of the so-called United States of America, both parties

of which have survived the ongoing violence of racist-capitalist systems which sought to actively destroy them, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that these reparations are not taken out of congregational endowments, but are taken out of the unrestricted funds available in the endowment of the UUA itself, in a timeline that is in alignment with the Endowment Payout Policy, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this General Assembly requests that the UUA Board of Trustees establish a Reparations Task Group of seven UUs who do not serve on the board and who are not UUA executive leadership (although these parties may participate as non-voting liaisons), who will form, monitor, and assess the reparations process in line with our shared values and commitments as Unitarian Universalists, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, this task group's membership should comprise a wide spectrum of leaders, which could include leadership from UU justice-seeking organizations, students, activists, teachers, community leaders, elders, and/or young people, with a priority given towards those who live at the intersection of multiple systems of oppression, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this task group should hold regular public forums that involve stakeholders in collaborative discernment and conversation about the mechanism and timetable of how and when reparations will be redistributed, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a progress report of the reparations task group detailing the status of this process and its discernment will be provided at least annually beginning in 2024 prior to the General Assembly, ending only after the reparations process is completed in full, in a manner consistent with our core values, and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that this General Assembly encourages Unitarian Universalist congregations and Unitarian Universalists to review their congregational and personal investments in order to take action in response to climate change, build community connection and resilience, and pay reparations to historically exploited communities by divesting their holdings in fossil fuel companies.