

Letter to MPERS, March 2016 re: ExxonMobil investments

Dear Ms. Matheson, Mr. Sawyer, and Mr. Leslie,

We are writing at this point in time with a particular concern about the investments MainePERS has in the ExxonMobil company, which, according to your financial reports, continues to rank high on the list of your top 10 direct common stock holdings.

The [US Department of Justice](#) has asked the Federal Bureau of Investigation to evaluate whether ExxonMobil has committed securities fraud and/or consumer fraud because of their failure to accurately report known climate risks to investors. This is in response to a call from the attorneys general of [California](#), [New York](#), [Massachusetts](#), & [the US Virgin Islands](#) to investigate ExxonMobil.

Maine Attorney General Janet Mills has just joined with them and other attorneys general from around the country to combat climate change. [She stated](#), “I am committed to using the authority of my office to address the problem in a meaningful way by defending important EPA regulations against attacks led by the coal industry and exploring litigation options that will hold the worst polluters accountable for their actions.”

Momentum is building, making a lawsuit appear very likely. Any such lawsuit would create significant negative publicity, and potentially lead to investor claims for damages. Both would be very costly to ExxonMobil.

The ESG policy recently enacted by MainePERS requires “due diligence” in regards to the environmental, social, and governance practices of the companies it invests in, including a commitment to:

“Examine and understand each potential or existing investment’s material ESG risk exposure and use this knowledge when evaluating potential investments and during the duration of investment ownership.” (MainePERS ESG Task Force Report, p. 8)

Whether or not the DOJ decides to sue ExxonMobil, it is clear that the [actions of the ExxonMobil company](#) are, and have been for some time, creating serious ESG risk exposure. Put together with continued [low oil prices](#), we believe that investment is

ExxonMobil is no longer in the best interests of the public pension holders of Maine. We urge MainePERS to commit to a plan to lower the exposure MainePERS's portfolio has to ExxonMobil stock at the earliest possible moment.

Sincerely,

Brian Banton, Teacher, Lewiston Public Schools

Mel Banton, MSAD Teacher, Retired

Michelle Bourget, Spanish Teacher, MSAD 51

Anne D. Burt, Environmental Justice Coordinator, Maine Council of Churches, retired

Suzanne D'Bourget, Portland Schools Speech/language pathologist, retired

Nicole d'Entremont, retired Portland Adult Education

Mary Dunn, Albert S. Hall School, Waterville

Jane Edwards, Deputy State Law Librarian, retired

Reva Eiferman, Spanish Teacher, Deering High School

Michelle Fournier, Maine Fossil Fuel Divestment Team

Jenny Gray, Draw Tender MDOT

Mary Harlan, Maine Teacher, retired

Matthew Houghton, Principal, RSU 3

Matthew Killmeier, MEA-AFUM member

Megan Lachapelle, EcoCovenant Committee Chair, Green St. United Methodist Church, Augusta

Meaghan LaSala, University of Southern Maine Professional Staff

Karen Marysdaugher, Maine Fossil Fuel Divestment Team

Kimberly McDonald, French Teacher, MSAD 51

Mike McGraw, Lewiston Teacher

David Millard, Retired Teacher

Sukie Rice, Portland Elementary Teacher, retired

Bill Rixon, Freeport Teacher, retired

Wendy Schlotterbeck, Teacher, MSAD 52

Charles Scimone, Teacher, Lincoln Academy

David Smith, Belfast Teacher, retired

Christopher Sutherland, Spanish Teacher, Greely High School, MSAD 51

Holly Zadra, Maine Fossil Fuel Divestment Team