

October 24, 2014

Governor Jerry Brown  
State Capitol  
Sacramento, CA

Dear Governor Brown,

You stated during the United Nations Climate Summit, “I believe that from the bottom up we can make a real impact.” We agree – and that is why we are calling on you to use your executive authority to place an indefinite moratorium on unconventional oil extraction methods such as fracking in California. This action represents an enormous opportunity for you to lead the nation in combating climate change.

In order to restrict global temperature rise to two degrees Celsius, the International Energy Agency warns that we need to leave two-thirds of proven fossil fuels in the ground.<sup>1</sup> Some analysts report that 80% must remain untouched.<sup>2</sup> Given the need to limit our use of fossil fuels, it is clear that we should halt extraction of the most climate-disrupting sources, such as California oil. The California Air Resources Board scores many of California’s oil fields as even more carbon-intensive than the Alberta oil sands, considered one of the reserves most threatening to the climate.<sup>3</sup>

We appreciate that you recognize the threats posed by California’s historic drought, and the fact that such crises will only worsen with climate change. Especially at this time, it is dangerous to employ enormous quantities of precious water – much of which is permanently contaminated during fracking operations<sup>4</sup> – in pursuit of fossil fuels.

Moreover, nearly 70% of Californians support a moratorium on all fracking.<sup>5</sup> Many local governments across the state are either prohibiting fracking or calling on you to do the same.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> International Energy Agency, “North America leads shift in global energy balance, IEA says in latest World Energy Outlook.” (November 12, 2012) Available at [https://www.iea.org/newsroomandevents/pressreleases/2012/november/name\\_33015.en.html](https://www.iea.org/newsroomandevents/pressreleases/2012/november/name_33015.en.html)

<sup>2</sup> Carbon Tracker Initiative, “Unburnable Carbon – Are the world’s financial markets carrying a carbon bubble?” (March 2012) Available at <http://www.carbontracker.org/report/carbon-bubble/>

<sup>3</sup> California Air Resources Board, Calculation of 2012 Crude Average CI Value. Sacramento, CA, California Air Resources Board. Available at <http://www.arb.ca.gov/fuels/lcfs/crude-oil/2012-crude-ave-ci.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> C.E. Clark and J.A. Veil, “Produced Water Volumes and Management Practices in the United States.” (September 2009), 30. The table shows that in 2007 69% of produced water from fracking operations in the United States was used for additional oil and gas extraction and 22% was permanently disposed of underground, accounting for 91% taken out of the water cycle.

<sup>5</sup> David Metz and Curtis Below, “Key Findings from Recent Survey on Fracking in California.” (May 20, 2014) Available at <http://www.sfgate.com/file/810/810-220-3865%20Fracking%20in%20CA%20-%20Survey%20Results%20Summary%20-%20D2.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> Center for Biological Diversity, “Local Measures to Stop Fracking.” (July 2014) Available at [http://www.biologicaldiversity.org/campaigns/california\\_fracking/pdfs/LocalMeasuresToStopFrackingInCalifornia\\_07-14-2014.pdf](http://www.biologicaldiversity.org/campaigns/california_fracking/pdfs/LocalMeasuresToStopFrackingInCalifornia_07-14-2014.pdf)

We would be extraordinarily proud to say that a Yale Law School alumna was responsible for leading the way on this important environmental policy issue in California and across the country. Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Respectfully Yours,<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> The signers are members of the Yale Environmental Law Association, though this letter does not represent the views of the organization as a whole.