

WHITING 41 SOLIDARITY STATEMENT

We stand with you today, not only as environmental activists, but as residents of Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, Michigan, Iowa, and other places around this country. We proclaim that a just transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy is the best hope our communities have for both an environmentally and economically sustainable future. We took a stand last May at the Break Free Midwest march, because we are tired of watching heavy industry poison our environment and decimate our economy in the name of corporate profit.

Northwest Indiana is a focal point for this crisis. From BP's reckless oil spill onto the shores of Lake Michigan, we have learned that these industries are not held accountable for their actions, and will not change their methods of operation until they are forced to do so. From the lead poisoning of East Chicago residents in the West Calumet neighborhood, we have learned that these industries leave a dark and lethal legacy behind them, long after their factories have been torn down. And when our indigenous brothers and sisters at Standing Rock took another brave stand in their centuries long fight against environmental injustice, we saw how the power of the state is organized to support these industries, when police officers from Northwest Indiana were sent to oppose the water protectors at Standing Rock, to support the very industry that is poisoning the people they have sworn to protect.

On a global level, 2016 saw the passing of the 400 parts per million carbon dioxide threshold for the first time in 4 million years, continued species extinction and loss of biodiversity, and countless acts of environmental injustice. And our nation has just elected a climate change denier who, in turn, nominated another denier as the head of the EPA and the CEO of Exxon Mobil as the Secretary of State. In the wake of these events, it can be difficult to hold to the hope and conviction required to keep our fight against climate change moving forward.

But it is in these times that we must remember the adage that "the power of the people is greater than the people in power". 2016 also saw incredible organizing and resistance in the face of oppression from Flint, Michigan, to Standing Rock, to East Chicago and Whiting, Indiana. We stand with you today to demand a just

transition to clean energy and the rejection of any politicians who would work against a just transition to renewable energy.

When communities like Northwest Indiana have been built on these industries, transitioning away from fossil fuels will be challenging ... but it can be done. Cleaner, greener, and better paying jobs will be a reality for our region, if we insist that our politicians and industries take responsibility for the damage that has been done to our communities. And if we insist that the profits that have been stolen from these communities be returned to support the just transition to renewable energy.

The fossil fuel era is coming to an end. And we will no longer be governed by the greed of the fossil fuel industry. We stand with frontline communities across the world. We stand with Standing Rock. We stand with Flint, Michigan. We stand with East Chicago and Gary. We stand with Marktown and Whiting. Will you stand with us?

Signed,

The Whiting 41, 350 Indiana-Calumet, 350 Kishwaukee, Save Our Illinois Lands (SOIL), Elgin Green Groups350, Fox Valley Citizens for Peace and Justice