

Request to Appear as a Delegation

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Name of Delegation: Sue Big Oil
Name of Primary Contact Person: Mark Norbury
Name(s) of Delegation Member(s) in Attendance: Fiona Koza, Justin Arsenault, Mark Norbury, Yolanda Broderick, Yvonne Szeto, Benjamin Perry, Catherine Ho, Mary Phelps, Silvia Cojocar, Marilyn Meden.
Purpose of Delegation: The purpose of the delegation is to request that the City of Port Moody attempt to recoup a fair share of its climate change costs by collaborating with other BC local governments in a class action lawsuit targeting the world's largest fossil fuel companies, in light of the contribution those companies have made in causing climate change. This requires that City Council commit a contribution of \$1 per head of Port Moody population. The contribution does not have to come out of this year's budget but should be earmarked so that it is ready for when the lawsuit is raised.
Details of Request: We've seen so many communities across the province and in fact throughout the world, devastated by costly climate change impacts, including wildfires and smoke, heatwaves, drought and flooding. Meanwhile, the world's largest oil, coal and gas companies have made hundreds of billions of dollars by selling products that cause greenhouse gas pollution. Their executives have known for decades that their products would cause the types of climate impacts that BC communities have suffered, and yet they chose to fund climate misinformation and lobbied hard against global rules that would protect our communities from climate change. Currently, taxpayers are expected to foot the bill for 100% of the costs associated with climate damage, adaption and preparedness, and those costs are set to rise annually as climate related events occur with greater frequency each year. Fossil fuel companies need to pay their fair share for climate costs, proportional to the amount of global greenhouse gases that their products have produced. As long as these companies continue to profit from the climate crisis without paying their fair share, they will appear to be wealth creators, because they are offloading the costs of their products onto our communities. As a result, investors will continue to invest in, and governments subsidize, these companies, making the climate crisis worse. A class action lawsuit would allow local governments to pool resources and use existing legal tools to force global fossil fuel companies that have caused harm in BC to pay their fair share. Having the municipalities themselves join together to raise the lawsuit will be very effective in helping municipalities plan for climate costs, rather than having to react to them as they occur. At the Port Moody Council Meeting of 9th April 2019, it was resolved to call upon the Province of British Columbia Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy to enact legislation that holds fossil fuel companies financially liable for climate-related harms caused by their contributions to climate change. This delegation builds upon that resolution by joining with other municipalities in raising such a lawsuit.
Additional Information in Support of Request: BC's class action law protects the parties against litigation rules that penalize unsuccessful parties by making them pay a portion of the other side's legal fees. Further information can be found at: https://suebigoil.ca/localgov