

September, 13, 2021

RE: Rep. Castor: Support Ending Fossil Fuel Subsidies

Dear Representative Castor,

On behalf of our thousands of members and activists in your district (CD-14), we, the undersigned 25 organizations, urge you to support the priorities in the End Polluter Welfare Act (H.R.2101) to stop the \$15 billion of subsidies currently given annually to the fossil fuel industry and ensure that an end to fossil fuel subsidies is included in the budget reconciliation process. We also urge you to push Congressional Leadership to remove the nearly \$25 billion of subsidies to the fossil fuel industry included in the new bipartisan infrastructure bill.

The most recent 2021 UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report is "Code Red for Humanity" and makes clear that we must "end all new fossil fuel exploration and production, and shift fossil-fuel subsidies into renewable energy." The U.S. must move off fossil fuels in the next decade if we hope to avoid runaway climate chaos. To do this, we need massive investments in renewable energy, but we also need to stop subsidizing the fossil fuel industry that is a main contributor to climate change.

At a time when we need to rapidly transition to 100% renewable energy to avoid runaway climate chaos, the federal government currently provides about \$15 billion in direct subsidies to the fossil fuel industry each year and included approximately \$25 billion of new subsidies in the new bipartisan infrastructure bill. Many of these subsidies are hidden in false solution subsidies to dirty energy, like carbon capture and sequestration. Every dollar we spend to support dirty energy incentivizes the continued use of fossil fuels and makes it more difficult to achieve the 100% renewable energy future we need to avoid climate chaos.

Climate change, driven by burning fossil fuels, is fueling stronger hurricanes, extreme heat, and worsening harmful algae blooms, all of which directly impact your constituents and all Floridians. Instead of fueling the problem, federal funds - taxpayer dollars - should be spent mitigating climate change by helping communities like Tampa reach their 100% renewable energy goals and making our communities more resilient.

A top priority for Congress and the Biden administration must be to remove these subsidies through the budget reconciliation process and to ensure that the infrastructure bill does not contain a single dollar in subsidies for dirty energy. Congress must eliminate federal tax breaks, loan guarantees, research support, and other aid for the fossil fuel industry.

We expect you to be a champion on this issue.

When you took office in 2007, you called for an end to fossil fuel subsidies:

https://www.legistorm.com/stormfeed/view_rss/301619/member/829/title/castor-works-to-cut-subsidies-to-big-oil-companies.html

On January 13th, 2021 you mentioned in a webinar that you think the deadline for moving to 100% renewable energy should be "closer to 2030".

You wrote in your August 9th, 2021 opinion editorial for the New York Times that "Congress has a moral obligation to advance policies that push the United States toward clean electricity and a net-zero emission economy."

During an interview on WMNF on August 18th, 2021, you responded to a caller saying that ending fossil fuel subsidies is "right up [your] alley".

On August 26th, you stated, "We are cutting them," in reference to fossil fuel subsidies. "As the Chair of the Climate Crisis Committee, I am working right now to make sure that we cut the fossil fuel subsidies out of the federal budget and instead invest in renewables."

The most effective way we can move toward a renewable future is by cutting off the taxpayer money pipeline to Big Oil & Gas. Please act now by repealing the fossil fuel subsidies in the infrastructure package, and co-sponsoring HR 2102, the End Polluter Welfare Act., ensuring that not a single dollar is going to the fossil fuel industry through the budget reconciliation process.

Signed,

Tampa Bay Climate Alliance
Food & Water Watch
Sunrise Plant High School
Sunrise Tampa
Florida Student Power Network
Physicians for Social Responsibility Florida
Center for Biological Diversity
GreenFaith
Moms Clean Air Force Florida
The CLEO Institute
Democratic Environmental Caucus of FL -
Hillsborough County
Florida Indigenous Rights and
Environmental Equality (FIREE)

Climate Reality Chapter, Tampa Bay
Our Climate
Urban Progress Alliance
Restorative Justice Coalition
Central Florida Jobs with Justice
Tampa Tenants Union
Sustainable Souls of Tampa Bay
Florida Voices for Progress
The Enlightened Ones PAC
LULAC Council 7259
Aquamarine Studio
Indivisible FL13
Pinellas Democratic Socialists of America