



Divest NY
For Immediate Release

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Divest NY Delivers 1750 petition signatures to NYSTRS calling for divestment

*Teachers, Students and Community Members call on NYSTRS
to Save our Pension – Save our Planet!*

(Albany) Divest NY today delivered over 1700 petition signatures via email to the ten-member board of directors of the NYS Teachers' Retirement System (NYSTRS) during their board meeting today.

"As a teacher I am concerned about the future of my students, AND I'm concerned about the financial stability of my retirement fund. If Comptroller DiNapoli believes it is financially irresponsible to invest in fossil fuels why is my pension fund still invested?" **said Lauren Kirkwood, a teacher and Divest NY member.**

"As the NYSTRS board meets today we call on them to fully commit to the future. They must create a climate action plan that stops funding climate destruction and helps to fund the transformation to a new energy economy. The climate crisis is destroying communities and lives now. Teachers are demanding not only a secure pension but also a secure future for the next generation," **said Ruth Foster of Divest NY.**

New York's climate law requires net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. Comptroller DiNapoli is currently divesting the NYS pension from coal, oil and gas companies and the New York City teachers' pension fund has also committed to divest. Governor Cuomo has [directed public authorities](#) which have assets valued at over \$40 billion to divest from fossil fuels. **Yet the NYS Teachers Retirement System (NYSTRS) has refused to develop a divestment plan or any type of climate action plan.**

Sixteen NYSUT locals [submitted resolutions calling on NYSTRS to divest](#) including the statewide UUP, PSC CUNY, Buffalo, Albany and Troy locals. These resolutions were sent to, and are expected to be voted on, during the Representative Assembly of NYSUT this weekend. Last year, NYSUT passed a resolution in support of divestment.

"As the climate crisis continues to accelerate, and as fossil fuels become more and more obsolete everyday, divestment is absolutely necessary for the protection of life on earth as well

as providing a sustainable future for the youth of today," said Matt Oill, member of Divest NY and the New York Youth Climate Leaders.

Across the world and here in New York State, more than [1300 institutions with assets over \\$14 trillion](#) including over 300 pension funds and governments have committed to divest from fossil fuels. Both the American Federation of Teachers and NYS United Teachers have passed resolutions in favor of divestment.

NYSTRS is a \$120 billion dollar public pension, one of the ten largest in the nation with an estimated \$4.5 billion in fossil fuel holdings. NYSTRS has over 434,000 members and beneficiaries, mostly teachers and school administrators and is under the oversight of the State Legislature.

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