

Media Advisory

****For Immediate Release**

Who: Hundreds of members of the international environmental movement Extinction Rebellion Boston (XR) and local groups including Beyond Plastics Greater Boston, Boston Democratic Socialists of America, Boston May Day Coalition, Brazilian Women's Group, Climate Code Blue, Community Church of Boston, Earth Day Boston, Fossil Fuel Divest Harvard, GreenRoots, Scientist Rebellion Turtle Island, and the broader public.

What: A massive rally, march and dance party on the occasion of the 54th year of celebrating Earth Day. Activists from environmental and social justice groups along with concerned members of the public will gather at Boston City Hall, then march to the MA State House to demand the state government take necessary and commensurate action to fight the present climate and ecological emergencies, and in particular pass binding legislation to achieve "No New Fossil Fuel Infrastructure."

Where: Starting at Boston City Hall, 1 City Hall Square St, Boston, MA 02201 and ending at Massachusetts State House, 24 Beacon St, Boston, MA 02133

When: Friday, April 21, 2023 from 3:30pm until 6pm

Why: Despite the climate emergency, the Commonwealth continues to allow new fossil fuel infrastructure to be built and has taken little action to curb the state's carbon emissions. Globally, any hope of meeting the goal of keeping temperature rise under 1.5 C is quickly fading due to willful government inaction, media silence, and further fossil fuel investments. Scientists have warned for decades about the impending climate breakdown, while activists have exhausted all the conventional methods of changemaking. To date, nothing has worked to bring down greenhouse gas emissions to levels in accordance with keeping global heating under tipping-point thresholds. Extinction Rebellion is continuing its ongoing campaign to demand that Governor Healey and Climate Chief Melissa Hoffer take action to stop *all* new fossil fuel infrastructure, including halting projects currently in development.

Event Details: Mass climate rally, march, signs, banners, speakers, music

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Photo and Video Drive:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1gGWL2TNsepoAZE3z4fc3txUvTC6Awqf?usp=share_link

Real-Time Twitter Coverage: [Extinction Rebellion Boston](#)

Additional information is available upon request

Press Release

Extinction Rebellion Boston organizes Earth Day march, rally, and dance party at the State House, demanding no new fossil fuel infrastructure in the Commonwealth

BOSTON, MA - On Friday, April 21st, more than 300 people gathered outside the Massachusetts State House to rally for Earth Day and protest the Commonwealth's slow action in addressing the climate and ecological emergency. The crowd, organized by Extinction Rebellion Boston (XR), included members from environmental and social advocacy groups Beyond Plastics Greater Boston, Boston Democratic Socialists of America, Boston May Day Coalition, Brazilian Women's Group, Climate Code Blue, Community Church of Boston, Earth Day Boston, Fossil Fuel Divest Harvard, GreenRoots, Scientist Rebellion Turtle Island and members of the public.

The rally began at 3:30pm outside Boston City Hall with music from a combined local brass band and speeches by XR members, including two youth activists. The multitude began its march down Tremont Street towards the Boston Common, passing The Embrace statue honoring Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Coretta Scott King and turning onto Beacon Street to reach its final destination in front of the Massachusetts State House. As the march moved through the streets, marshals wearing fluorescent vests managed the traffic flow to ensure everyone's safety. Marchers carried banners and signs reading "Declare Climate Emergency." Some dressed as animals or carried puppets to call attention to the approximately 1.6 million species that have gone extinct in the last 30 years¹ and the millions more under threat of extinction due to climate change and habitat loss.

XR member and Earth Day organizer Dr. Claire Paduano said, "I'm here because as a primary care physician I already see the suffering caused by pollution, environmental exposures, and displacement of people from their homes due to natural disasters. I don't even want to think about how bad things could get if we don't keep global warming below 1.5 or 2 degrees Celsius. What really makes me angry is that this suffering is experienced by people who aren't the main drivers of the problem. I'm here because I'm not going to let the fossil fuel industry kick us around. Their profits are nowhere near as important as our lives and health, not to mention the lives of so many plant and animal species we share this planet with."

At the State House, members from XR Boston, Beyond Plastics Greater Boston and East Boston-based NGO GreenRoots gave moving speeches focused on the rampant approval of oil and gas permits under the Biden administration, Massachusetts' ongoing permitting of new fossil fuel infrastructure across the Commonwealth, and local environmental injustices, including the construction of the East Boston Eversource substation.

Eileen Ryan, of Beyond Plastics, explained why her organization immediately signed up to co-sponsor the Earth Day rally. “Plastics are the fossil fuel industry’s Plan B as transportation and buildings become more energy efficient. Pipelines traveling through Massachusetts are being used to transport fossil fuels to produce plastics, which are creating an ecological, environmental, and human health crisis.”

After each speech, the gathered crowd sent a massive, coordinated Tweetstorm to Governor Healey and her administration:

The [#fossilfuel](#) industry has its grip on politicians everywhere, who allow new drilling & plastic production despite the [#ClimateCrisis](#) Break free & declare [#NoNewFossilFuelInfrastructure](#) & ban [#SingleUsePlastic](#) in MA! [@PlasticsBeyond](#) [#PlanetOrPlastic](#)

.[@mayorwu](#) [@massgovernor](#) Parts of East Boston will be underwater by 2050. MA must lead [#NoNewFossilFuelInfrastructure](#) and protect frontline communities who already bear the brunt of profit-driven energy policy [#NoEastieSubstation](#) [#ClimateJustice](#) [@GreenRootsEJ](#)

After the speeches, the protestors lay down on the pavement for a “die-in,” representing the millions of human, plant and animal deaths in the present and the future resulting from catastrophic climate change. They were serenaded by an a capella choir that sang “We’re dying here, for this is an emergency. We’re dying here for all that we hold dear”. A performance activist troupe known as the Red Rebel Brigade, whose performers dress in red to represent the life blood running through all creatures, walked amongst the “dead,” mourning the loss of biodiversity and a livable planet.

Harley Takagi Kaner, an XR Boston organizer emceeding the event, said, "As we witness more and more climate catastrophes unfold globally, it can be terrifying and infuriating to see government inaction and total capitulation to the power and influence of the fossil fuel industry. XR puts a lot of effort into targeted direct action to combat environmental injustice, but on days like today, we think it's important to reach out to the community and remember that we are collectively powerful and we do this work for each other."

The brass band played mournful tunes during the die-in, morphing into progressively energetic and joyful beats as the “dead” rose up and began to dance. The somber feelings gave way to exuberance and celebration of a still-achievable world in which humans live in harmony with nature. The dance party continued until 6pm.

Extinction Rebellion's Position on “No New Fossil Fuel Infrastructure”

The Massachusetts State Government must make decisions based on the well-established scientific consensus of the climate emergency and stop fueling the climate fire with new fossil fuel infrastructure.

According to a recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report, without an immediate transition to renewable energy, humanity “will miss a brief and rapidly closing window of opportunity to secure a livable and sustainable future for all.”² Yet Massachusetts continues to build new greenhouse-gas-spewing fossil fuel infrastructure, in spite of a state law that requires the Commonwealth to reduce emissions by 50% by 2030 and reach net zero carbon by 2050. It is impossible to meet MA’s own targets if the new and proposed oil and gas infrastructure is used for even a fraction of their intended lifespan. Even if the state law’s targets are met, they are insufficient to comply with the scale of worldwide carbon reductions needed to avoid climate catastrophe.

Massachusetts has the ability to be a national leader during the rapid transition away from fossil fuels to green, renewable energy. We should stop investing rate-payer money in fossil fuel infrastructure that will need to be abandoned before its full useful life. Instead, we must make a commitment to no new fossil fuel infrastructure and start building local jobs around alternatives to natural gas, including geothermal and electric heating sourced from renewable energy sources.

Massachusetts must announce a moratorium on new fossil fuel infrastructure and cancel all fossil fuel infrastructure projects currently being constructed or proposed. Governor Healey has the ability to revoke individual infrastructure permits and appoint board members to infrastructure projects who are committed to 100% renewable energy.

Banning new fossil fuel infrastructure includes:

- Fossil fuel power generation plants
- Natural gas hookups for residential, commercial, and municipal properties, in favor of electric
- Natural gas distribution pipelines, transmission pipelines, and compressor stations
- Liquefied natural gas production facilities, storage facilities, and terminals
- Gas stations and other gasoline and diesel infrastructure

End fossil fuel projects under development:

- MMWEC’s Peaker Plant in Peabody
- NEC’s Liquefied Natural Gas Facility in Charlton
- Eversource’s expansion of gas pipelines in Worcester and Hopkinton

Governor Healey has an imperfect record on climate.³ She and the Attorneys General in Rhode Island, Connecticut, and Minnesota sued ExxonMobil for deceiving the public on the grave risks of fossil fuel combustion, but during her tenure as Attorney General, Healey prevented multiple municipalities from banning natural gas hookups in new construction. The Town of Brookline passed such legislation twice and both times Healey struck it down, citing an arcane public utilities law and siding with the gas companies and real estate industry. Since being elected to the Governor’s office, she did not deny taking \$50,000 in political donations from the fossil fuel

industry⁴ and up to \$25,000 from three different gas supply companies for her inauguration party. Extinction Rebellion rebels rallied inside the State House during her inauguration on January 5th of this year, calling on her to prioritize the climate emergency by putting a moratorium on fossil fuel infrastructure, and staged a sit-in in the Executive Office in February, during which 14 activists were arrested, to sound the alarm on her administration's lack of commitment to real action.

2021 was Boston's hottest year on record⁵, and studies have shown that New England is warming faster than the rest of the planet.⁶ MA residents are increasingly frustrated with the lack of real action from the Commonwealth. With climate justice civil disobedience on the rise, how long does our government intend to deny the facts?

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Extinction Rebellion Boston is an autonomous chapter of the international grassroots movement, Extinction Rebellion (XR), which started in London in 2018. The purpose of XR is to tell the truth about the severity of the ecological and climate crises and spark immediate action in order to prevent climate and ecological collapse. We aim to mobilize people around the world to utilize nonviolent direct action to demand that governments take radical action to avert societal collapse caused by widespread climate and ecological disaster and to protect frontline communities, biodiversity, and the natural world. This movement is non-political and unites all of humanity behind a singular goal of a just and livable future for all. Learn more about Extinction Rebellion at: xrboston.org

Endnotes

1. <https://a-z-animals.com/blog/how-many-species-go-extinct-on-average-per-day-and-per-year/>
2. <https://www.ipcc.ch/2022/02/28/pr-wgii-ar6/>
3. <https://www.bostonherald.com/2022/04/27/maura-healey-is-challenged-to-reject-fossil-fuel-donations-i-am-not-on-their-holiday-card-list/>
4. <https://www.bostonglobe.com/2023/02/06/metro/healeys-takes-more-than-29-million-fund-inaugural-party-most-ever-by-governor/>
5. <https://www.bostonglobe.com/2022/01/03/science/2021-was-bostons-warmest-year-record/>
6. <https://www.bostonglobe.com/2022/12/07/science/new-england-winters-are-getting-much-warmer-data-shows/>