**For Immediate Release**

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**Extinction Rebellion and Sunrise hold tax day Climate protest at the Federal Reserve in Boston**

*Climate Activists demand the Massachusetts and federal governments stop using our tax dollars to bail out polluting fossil fuel corporations*

BOSTON, MA — Local members of the international grassroots movement, Extinction Rebellion (XR), were joined by activists from Sunrise Boston, a youth-led climate group, to demand that the Massachusetts and federal government stop using our tax dollars to subsidize and bail out fossil fuel companies.

“We chose July 15, tax day, for our action because the U.S. government gives massive subsidies and tax breaks to oil, coal, and natural gas corporations - the very companies that are fueling our destruction and putting life on earth at risk of extinction,” says Matthew Kearney from Extinction Rebellion Boston. “We are demanding that the US government shut down the subsidies and end the bail outs for the oil, coal, and gas industries and redirect those billions of dollars to communities on the front line of the climate and ecological emergency. We need a rapid transition to clean, renewable sources of energy and ecological sustainability.”

The action highlighted the necessity of a just transition away from fossil fuels and towards renewable, sustainable sources of energy that prioritize the most vulnerable people and establish indigenous sovereignty and remediation led by and for Blacks, people of color, Indegenous, and all communities on the front line of the climate and ecological emergency.

The federal government provides massive subsidies to oil, natural gas, and coal companies. Estimates suggest that the U.S.hands over at least $20 billion in subsidies and tax breaks to the fossil fuel industry every year. Twenty percent is currently allocated to coal, with eighty percent allocated to crude oil and natural gas.¹ On top of subsidies, fossil fuel corporations receive billions in bailouts from the federal government.² Top oil and gas executives receive compensation of nearly $1 billion a year.³

“Oil executives knew decades ago that their industry was disrupting the earth’s climate and causing global temperatures to rise,” said Kearney. “Rather than lead a transition to clean renewable energy sources, they buried their own research, attacked independent climate science, and expanded drilling, all with the benefit of government subsidies.”

According to Rebecca Beitsch from The Hill, “A 2018 EPA study found black Americans are subjected to higher levels of air pollution than whites, while a 2011 study found that communities of color and low-income populations are disproportionately exposed to chemical releases. Others have found that minority and low income communities were more likely to be near hazardous waste sites.”⁴

A 25-foot bright pink sailboat with the words “Climate Emergency” and “Just Transition” was parked in front of the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston. A skit was performed on the boat, with fake “oil” poured over a few activists to demonstrate how profit for fossil fuels continues to override the health and safety of people and planet.

Participants held signs and large banners as they sang and chanted to draw attention to the urgency of both the climate crisis and environmental injustice that continues to put Blacks, Indigenous, People of Color, and the poor at greater risk because dangerous and polluting infrastructure that is offloaded in the communities where they live, play, pray, and work.

“For over 30 years we have known how serious the climate crisis is and the urgent need to curb emissions. Unfortunately, during this time, emissions have risen over 60%. As a result, we face near-term collapse of civilization.⁶ That is why we believe it is time for nonviolent direct action. We know that our action is an inconvenience, but we are afraid for our future and the future of our children. We are afraid of coastal communities flooding, dangerous heat waves and weather events, and water and food shortages that threaten our safety and survival,” writes Nadia Colburn, PhD, of Cambridge, MA. “We cannot continue to let the government be lobbied by the fossil fuel industry and give subsidies and tax breaks to the very companies that are endangering the lives of our children.”

Three major reports from the UN’s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and one from the Intergovernmental [Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services](https://www.ipbes.net/) were released in 2018 and 2019.⁵ ⁶ These reports paint a dire picture: if we do not transition off fossil fuels almost immediately, we will face global famines, water shortages, increased transmission of disease, worsening wildfires, more frequent and deadly heat waves and weather events, flooding from rising sea levels, and mass climate migrations which expose already vulnerable populations to human rights abuses.

Extinction Rebellion utilizes nonviolent direct action to raise public awareness about the climate crisis and demand that governments, news media, and polluting industries tell the truth about the climate emergency. They demand that Governor Baker, the United States government, and governments around the globe enact legally-binding policies to reduce carbon emissions to net zero by 2025 and take further action to remove the excess of atmospheric greenhouse gases in order to protect life on earth and ensure a safe and livable planet for generations to come.

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\*Extinction Rebellion Massachusetts 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 how dire the ecological and climate crisis is and spark immediate action in order to prevent complete 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 front-line 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. Learn more at: [xrboston.org](https://xrmass.org/about)

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3. [Think Progress, "What Five Oil Companies Did With Their $375 Million In Daily Profits"](https://thinkprogress.org/what-five-oil-companies-did-with-their-375-million-in-daily-profits-920ad33d1641/)
4. [The Hill, "Trump's latest environmental rollback threatens minority communities, experts warn"](https://thehill.com/policy/energy-environment/501444-trumps-latest-environmental-rollback-threatens-minority-communities?fbclid=IwAR1SNuY3Ee50YyR37Ff2ncze340Iv_TYKyuDmWNFC2oU5m8OdaIQ1nB8n6o)
5. [IPCC Report](https://www.ipcc.ch/sr15/?fbclid=IwAR2GQ1GNrlElVYafqXOG8PlvkK_8HBVpdsktXP51cRXpH7810YRDUcnQZBk) Global Warming of 1.5 ºC, [IPCC Report on Climate Change and Land,](https://www.ipcc.ch/srccl/) [IPCC Report on the Ocean and Cryosphere in a Changing Climate](https://www.ipcc.ch/srocc/)
6. [IPBES 2019 Report](https://www.ipbes.net/news/how-did-ipbes-estimate-1-million-species-risk-extinction-globalassessment-report?fbclid=IwAR0IdH0XQMdDfk1R6bQwUeVP0uiwi_QbWCz1HSeYcC5mPRGLKuQVk1tONis)
7. [New York Times, “Climate Change Threatens the World’s Food Supply, United Nations Warns”](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/08/climate/climate-change-food-supply.html)