



## California Interfaith Power & Light

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February 16, 2016

Oakland Mayor Libby Schaaf  
Members of Oakland City Council  
1 Frank Ogawa Plaza  
Oakland, CA 94612

Dear Mayor Schaaf and City Council members:

We write to you as people of faith to urge that you do all you can to keep coal out of Oakland.

Coal is bad for the climate, public health and the environment. Coal dust and particulate matter pose significant threats to Bay Area air and water quality. Coal breaks apart easily to create dust that contains mercury, arsenic, uranium, and hundreds of other toxins. The transport of coal through marine terminals poses a significant threat to the San Francisco Bay and the species that depend on a healthy aquatic environment. Coal dust would also exacerbate the air pollution problems already plaguing West Oakland, where residents are already twice as likely to visit the emergency room for asthma as the average Alameda County resident, and are also more likely to die of cancer and heart and lung disease.

The religious community around the world is calling on all of us to transition to a carbon neutral future.

Pope Francis in his recent encyclical on environmental and economic justice wrote: “We know that technology based on the use of highly polluting fossil fuels – especially coal...needs to be progressively replaced without delay.”

He is joined by religious leaders from other traditions calling on the world to end the burning of fossil fuels:

"Human behavior that overworks the Earth - especially the overburning of fossil fuels --- crests in a systemic planetary response that endangers human communities and many other life-forms as well." --Rabbinical Letter on Climate Crisis (signed by more than 300 Rabbis)

“phase out greenhouse gas emissions as soon as possible in order to stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere” – Islamic Declaration on Climate Change

“We must 'de-carbonize' our energy systems as quickly as feasible by replacing fossil fuels with renewable energy sources that are limitless, benign and harmonious with nature. We especially need to halt the construction of new coal plants, since coal is by far the most polluting and most dangerous source of atmospheric carbon.” -- Buddhist Declaration on Climate Change

Please stand with every Oakland resident who cares about the global climate and public health, oppose this proposal and any other that would export of coal from Oakland's ports.

Faithfully,

The Rt. Rev. Marc Handley Andrus  
Episcopal Bishop of California

Rabbi Marvin Goodman  
Northern California Board of Rabbis

The Rev. Will Scott, Program Director  
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