

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Fossil Free Illinois Organizes the “March For Our Climate” at the University of Illinois

Illinois, Urbana-Champaign — On September 19th, Fossil Free Illinois will lead a campus-wide protest at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. Fossil Free Illinois has urged community members to gather at the University of Illinois Alma Mater Statue before marching the length of the Main Quad and rallying north of Foellinger Auditorium. Fossil Free Illinois will host speakers at Alma Mater, with several more on the Main Quad, all of which will be representing their respective student organizations. Student organizations speaking with Fossil Free Illinois at this event, and their speaking order, are as follows:

- The Young Democratic Socialists of America
- Students for Justice in Palestine
- Illini Democrats
- Graduate Employees Organization
- Amnesty International
- Students for Environmental Concerns

Student organizers from Fossil Free Illinois have articulated why they are protesting and what their demands are as follows:

“The University of Illinois System currently has approximately \$170 million invested in fossil fuels, a consistently volatile and progressively dying industry.”

“Our [research](#) indicates that shifting these investments into ex-energy funds leads to higher year-over-year returns compared to their fossil fuel counterparts.”

“Students from the University of Illinois have overwhelmingly shown support for changing these investments. In a campus-wide student referendum in Spring 2025, 72.94% of student voters were in favor of divesting from fossil fuels. If the administration isn’t listening to students, then who are they listening to?”

“Not only are they ignoring students, but they are also lying directly to them. In the 2020 Illinois Climate Action Plan, signed by Chancellor Jones, the University of Illinois committed to ceasing investments in the fossil fuel industry by 2025 — fully divesting.”

“We have one demand of the University: Listen to your students. There has been a clear and precipitous effort by students on this campus asking for divestment, yet we have been consistently shut out of conversations and called a ‘loud minority.’”

“Demanding a voice in the administration's investment decisions regarding the use of our tuition shouldn't be controversial. So until we have an adequate say in these conversations, these protests will continue.”

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About Fossil Free Illinois:

Fossil Free Illinois is a student-led social movement taking climate action and pressuring the University of Illinois System to divest, dissociate, and decarbonize from fossil fuels. Fossil Free Illinois began in 2024 as a social media campaign to reach and educate the student populations of all three University of Illinois campuses on their schools' investments and how they can get involved in taking action. Since then, Fossil Free Illinois has done extensive research into these investments, building the financial rationale for divestment and developing a three-year plan for achieving it. The organization also successfully passed a University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign campus-wide student referendum.