

Proposed: "ZERO FOSSIL FUEL" MINUTE:

BACKGROUND

We now live in a changing climate on track to make the Earth nearly uninhabitable by humans. The scientific evidence now is beyond credible question in showing that atmospheric carbon dioxide and other human-driven emissions

- increase global temperatures,
- dry the land and everything growing on it,
- increase the size and frequency of forest fires,
- warm the oceans,
- melt our icecaps and glaciers,
- raise our sea levels,
- flood our communities, and
- amplify the destructive power of wind, rain, and hurricanes.

(*NOTE: Following this minute is a first draft specifying CO2 parts per million in our atmosphere.)

Locally, our community, Anne Arundel County, and Maryland all face both stronger hurricanes and more frequent, extensive flooding. Around the U.S., the cost is staggering in lives and property from fire, wind, floods, and ever increasing heat. (Reference [National Climate Assessment](#)-- note: costs to be compared with wars, dustbowl.)

The rest of the world may suffer equal and greater consequences, particularly in areas exposed to the greatest impacts of sea-level rise and more violent storms. Too many areas lack economic resources to mitigate their ever-increasing injuries. With climate chaos driving economic disintegration and waves of immigration, genocide and wars also are imminent risks of this ongoing global disaster.

The U.S., as a nation, unquestionably has presented the single largest source of emissions causing climate change with our years of denial and inadequate government action; as such, the U.S. carries a special responsibility. We must address the causes of climate change, we must work with the [United Nations](#) and [other nations of the world](#) on this, and we must offer our best available leadership and resources to do so.

How can we assess the harm that is being done by our modern industries and the steps needed to undo it? In the three hundred thousand years of human history before 1850, atmospheric carbon dioxide (ACO2) never rose above 280 ppm (parts per million). Since 1850, our use of fossil fuels increased exponentially until today ACO2 has reached about 415 ppm, and still rises. ([Animated timelapse chart-CO2 increase since 1979.](#))

To reverse these trends of climate change and to maintain an inhabitable planet, we must cease as soon as possible the use of fossil fuels with a goal to restore ACO2 to 280 ppm or below. To do so, *we need to replace all existing fossil based power plants, world wide, with fossil-free plants.* Without prejudging the technology to replace fossil power generation, it is evident that any new fossil fuel infrastructure currently under construction must be abandoned before it is amortized and set in motion to continue our deadly trend of ACO2 increase.

MINUTE

Annapolis Friends Meeting, having studied the dangers of climate change and embracing our faith that that calls us to love our neighbors as ourselves, joins with Quakers and other people of faith:

-to live according to our convictions and to learn how to eliminate our own fossil fuel consumption as soon as possible;

-to call upon our governments and our power companies to abandon of all incomplete infrastructural designed to generate or distribute fossil based electrical power, including all planned, and not-yet-operating infrastructural investments; and

-to reach out to our brothers and sisters in other nations to seek as soon as possible a world-wide ban on any greater fossil-fuel generation.

We recognize that such a worldwide ban may impact most severely those nations, such as China and India that have major fossil fuel infrastructure planned and under construction. Therefore, we call upon our economists, diplomats and our representatives in the United Nations to devise plans to mitigate this loss and to assist in the international transition to clean energy sources.

What clean energy alternatives will prove the best replacement for our toxic tradition of fossil fuels? Could solar, wind, ocean-hydropower, and geothermal reach the level of efficiency needed? Could greater energy efficiency in our homes, our transportation, and, even, our military make a difference? Could the next generation of safer nuclear power with molten salt reactors be adopted? Could clean biofuels decentralize our current production models? We cannot foresee the details of this future. But, we cannot avoid knowing the continuation of human life and the natural world require these steps.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

Annapolis Friends Meeting recommends:

- 1) That this minute be circulated to other local meetings within Baltimore Yearly Meeting and elsewhere in the Religious Society of Friends.
- 2) That Friends should seek for the actions sought and the issues presented in this minute be made the subject of community forums and discussion -- by virtual means during pandemic times and in person when public health measures permit this. That Friends especially should seek to support the efforts of Fridays for the Future and other youth-led movements. That these efforts also should seek to embrace the young leaders in our public schools, AACCC, St. Johns College and the U.S. Naval Academy.
- 3) That Friends should seek for the actions sought in this minute also to be shared outside the Religious Society of Friends with other faith groups to seek united interfaith efforts.
- 4) That, as individuals, Friends should heed the example of John Woolman to live our lives in a way that removes fossil fuel and other causes of climate change, and that may serve as an example to others.
- 5) That, in carrying forward this message, Friends should remember that there is "that of God" in all our neighbors regardless of political and economic and differences and that our power of persuasion will come from more Light and less heat.

[Possible references: <https://upi.com/7039570> - study showing the most affluent are the greatest contributors to fossil fuel use]

* FIRST DRAFT OF "ZERO FOSSIL FUEL" MINUTE
including statistics as to ongoing atmospheric CO2 increase

"The past few years have seen increasingly damaging bad weather which scientists attribute to the steady increase in atmospheric carbon dioxide (ACO2) due to humanities use of fossil fuels(coal, oil and natural gas). In the three hundred thousand years before 1850, (while humans were evolving) ACO2 had never been above 280 ppm (parts per million). Since 1850 our use of fossil fuels has increased steadily and monotonically until today ACO2 is about 415 ppm, and rising.

"To maintain an inhabitable planet we must cease using fossil fuels (indeed to be "safe" we need to restore ACO2 to 280 ppm or below). It will be possible to replace fossil fuel power plants with nuclear or any alternative fossil-free technology, we need to replace all existing fossil based power plants, world wide, with fossil-free plants.

"Without prejudging the technology to replace fossil power generation, it is evident that any new fossil fuel infrastructure currently under construction will have to be abandoned before it is amortized.

"Accordingly, we call for abandonment of all incomplete infrastructural designed to generate or distribute fossil based electrical power. This includes all planned, and also not yet operating infrastructural investments. We need a world-wide ban. Unfortunately this will impact most severely developing nations, such as China and India that have major fossil fuelinfrastructure planned and under construction.

"We recommend that while construction capacity for nuclear plants falls short of demand, priority be given to the countries with the lowest per capita use of electricity. We also recommend banning the use of fossil fuels in private planes, and the return of all military forces to within their national boundaries and national air and sea space."

-prepared by AFM Friend Will Candler