

Polluter *Pay* Federation

Alberta is in Crisis as Oil and Gas Polluters Refuse to Pay

BACKGROUND: The Canadian oil and gas industry has powerful lobby associations. This collective lobby provides the means for industry to circumvent a legal principle known as the *polluter pay principle*, which principle is entrenched in Alberta and federal energy, land use, and environmental laws.

The polluter pay principle is being largely ignored by industry and those charged with regulation of polluting industries alike. If we don't require polluters to pay, the costs will be borne by the taxpayer.

NO CURE: When we become unwell we rely on our health care system. Problematically there is no cure for the pandemic neuromuscular and other diseases caused by the illegal venting of natural gases to atmosphere that are making us UnWell in Alberta. There is no cure for the novel coronavirus Covid-19.

PREVENTATIVE MEDICINE: In this viral pandemic crisis we are told that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. Our Prime Minister has told us that there is nothing the federal government will not do to keep us healthy and safe. Related to upstream oil and gas safety, the provincial government and its Alberta Energy Regulator have done almost nothing to keep us safe.

HIDDEN DANGERS: Oil and gas wells, which often have parents missing in action, are left inactive and in an unsafe condition for extended periods of time. Even so-called "abandoned" wells leak gas (an abandoned well has been decommissioned or plugged, buried, cut off below surface and buried out of site and mind, and vented). Like health care workers, those who host illegal and unsafe energy activities on their land do not have sufficient safety measures or equipment in place to protect them from hidden dangers.

HANDS IN OUR WALLETS AND PENSION FUNDS: Alberta has at least 550,000 oil and gas wells, 4 out of 5 of which will never produce again, at least not economically. These wells need to be "abandoned", and the related site must be cleaned up to render the land restored to regulated standards. The owners of these wells are broke, and have therefore been unable to raise investment capital or to borrow other than from AIMCO. The province is reaching into the pension funds of its citizens to raise capital for AMICO to throw at industry players that cannot pay host landowners or municipal taxes, let alone repay their loans, or provide a return on investment to AIMCO or any pension fund.

CONTRACTING JOB MARKET: Alberta is laying off education workers because of Covid-19. Record low commodity prices will cause enormous employment contraction. Plans to lay off health care and other government workers triggered a red wave of protest before the viral pandemic was an urgent issue in Alberta, but public protests cannot occur during a time of social distancing.

MASSIVE, UNFUNDED LIABILITIES: Industry and the government of Alberta are not only reaching into pension funds in an attempt to sustain a dead, insolvent upstream oil and gas industry, these irresponsible factions of our society expect landowners and taxpayers to absorb some **\$50 - \$100 Billion** in unfunded "end of life" costs for inactive oil and gas wells and facilities.

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The Polluter Pay Solution – a Call to Action

COUNTERVAILING LOBBY: There is a simple solution, which a handful of informed Albertans have identified and are getting off the ground: The **Polluter *Pay* Federation**.

The proposed Federation will be a countervailing lobby, which can be primarily funded by industry. By way of reliance on the compensatory rights of landowners, certain Albertans can require polluters to clean up their messes at their sole cost, and cause them to take their hands out of our collective wallets and pension funds.

JOB CREATION IN THE NEW CLEANUP ECONOMY: A \$50-\$100 Billion injection of oil and gas infrastructure removal and cleanup will solve the contracting job market problem and propel Alberta and its economy towards the future. Providing bailout dollars to a broken and broken industry with no future is a fool's game. Saving portions of the service sector of the industry where the jobs and economic growth potential truly exist, and creating a new cleanup industry sector, are the only viable solutions. This is what is commonly known as a "no brainer", which has at its root a return to the rule of law.

SMALL INITIAL FUNDING PUSH FROM CITIZENS REQUIRED: The beauty of the solutions devised by the Temporary Steering Committee is that the taxpayer is the main benefactor, at little to no cost to the taxpayer at large. However, the Federation requires interim funding in relatively small amounts to get its concepts off the ground. A small contribution from a fraction of Canada's taxpayers is all that is required to provide the push needed to propel the Federation to the point where polluters are caused to pay as required by law.

Please Join or Donate, and Help Spread the Word

WE'RE COUNTING ON ORGANIZATIONS: Members of the Temporary Steering Committee of the Polluter Pay Federation have set up a [new website](#) and started a [Go Fund Me Campaign](#). They're counting on organized groups of Albertans and Canadians to help spread the word about the Federation, its enormous benefits to taxpayers and landowners, and the Federation's initial, urgent need for temporary funding.

- Please help us save the future of Alberta and its citizens, and their health and safety.
- Please visit our website, watch the videos, and listen to the podcasts.
- Please join the Federation or donate a small sum such as \$20.00.
- Please tell your friends, neighbors, union leaders, and members of your social networks.

THANK YOU!

Polluter Pay Federation Temporary Steering Committee