



*Building People Power for Climate & Energy Justice*

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February 19, 2018

Lynn J. Good  
President and Chief Executive Officer  
Duke Energy Corporation  
Charlotte, North Carolina

Subject: New NASA data fuels an urgent appeal for you to help avert runaway climate chaos

Dear Ms. Good,

As the hour grows very late, NC WARN and allies again urge you to personally provide leadership by shifting Duke Energy to the right side of history – from being a key cause of the accelerating climate crisis to joining those taking bold actions to avert runaway climate, social and economic chaos.

We are urging you to do two things as quickly as possible in all states and nations where Duke Energy operates: 1) Stop venting unburned methane into the air from natural gas operations, and 2) Commit to expeditiously replacing all fossil fuel electricity with renewables matched with energy storage, efficiency and energy-balancing programs.

In January, NASA released a powerful study that confirms previous research: Global methane emissions have been rising rapidly in recent years, mostly due to the fossil fuel industry. NASA's findings support multiple earlier studies showing "natural" gas is a key driver of global warming. They also bolster arguments that the U.S. fracking boom is linked to record-breaking global heat since 2014, thus linked indirectly to the acceleration of weather extremes that are devastating communities worldwide. Those least responsible for fossil fuel pollution – the poor and people of color – are suffering disproportionately. This includes the very people in flood-ravaged eastern North Carolina who you claim would benefit from the proposed Atlantic Coast Pipeline (ACP) that would transport fracked natural gas.

Tragically, the U.S. news media continue to let the gas and power industries get away with the half-truth that gas is "cleaner" than coal. While natural gas *burns* cleaner, it is mostly methane that is up to 105 times stronger than carbon dioxide at holding heat close to the earth during a 20-year time frame. Methane's global warming effects are immediate, and so much unburned gas escapes into the air before reaching the power plant and other end users that the fuel is even worse for the

climate than coal. This is well documented, as we have conveyed to you numerous times since you began to greatly expand the use of fracked natural gas in 2015.

As for economic promises of the ACP: Superstorms and other climate disasters are already heavily penalizing eastern North Carolina in lives, pain and lost property, a price sure to worsen. Instead, Duke Energy could truly turn green, for example by helping advance *NC Clean Path 2025*, a strategy that can create thousands of jobs statewide by quickly replacing fossil fuel electricity with cheaper, reliable on-site solar power, battery backup, and the essentially untapped potential offered by energy efficiency and demand response.

Several climate scientists have calculated that, within five years, the planet will cross a tipping point into runaway global warming – beyond human control. Some believe we're already at that point. Cutting methane emissions can immediately help slow global warming, buying precious time for us to replace all fossil fuels and reverse deforestation, another essential task. But Duke Energy is on record opposing requirements to cost-effectively cut those methane emissions.

To be clear, we want Duke Energy to terminate its huge expansion of fracked gas burning and the Atlantic Coast Pipeline. Meanwhile, however, we should all be able to agree that, to the extent you continue piping and burning gas, you should move with utmost urgency to stop venting unburned methane – and press your colleagues throughout the oil, gas and power industries to do the same.

The power and gas industries have gambled that the public won't learn that natural gas is driving humanity toward runaway climate chaos – and that a clean, cheaper, job-creating path could be ramped up quickly. Other U.S. utilities are already generating 20 – 30 percent from renewables. Increasingly, they are doing so on rooftops and parking lots – close to where the power is used – and using on-site battery storage and demand response as a cheaper strategy than constantly building unneeded power plants.

Your public relations efforts have made North Carolinians think Duke Energy is a solar leader, but your official documents confirm that your generation in the Carolinas is only around two percent renewable, and that you plan to be at only seven percent in 15 years. Your PR is a response to the fact that business leaders and the public – left and right – want truly clean, affordable power, yet it is clear that Duke is aligned with the Koch brothers' national strategy to stifle the growth of solar.

All this points to the 2013 warning by your predecessor, Jim Rogers, that distributed, renewable power generation is the future of electricity. You probably agree, but it seems clear that Duke Energy and others are trying to lock in as much capital investment as possible before fossil fuels are phased out. Those are high-risk investments even in your monopoly states because consumers will fight against paying for stranded assets, as is happening with the failure of the nuclear "renaissance."

Finally, as noted to you and Mr. Rogers many times over many years, NC WARN is eager to stop fighting Duke Energy executives, and to seek cooperative efforts to tackle the climate crisis in order to avoid increasing levels of social and economic chaos. We are confident that ours is the rational and conservative position, as compared to that of corporate energy executives who hang on to practices that are economically dated even as they threaten the very existence of life on the planet.

We urge you to publish an open, comprehensive response to this letter within ten days, to explain any ways you believe we are off target. More importantly, please let us know you will choose to have one of the world's largest corporate utilities go down in history as having risen to an enormous challenge to humanity before it became too late.

Sincerely,



Jim Warren  
Executive Director

cc: Governor Roy Cooper  
Attorney General Josh Stein  
Former Duke Energy CEO Jim Rogers

Utilities Commission Chair Edward Finley  
Public Staff Executive Director Christopher  
Ayers

*This letter has been endorsed by the following:*

Center for Biological Diversity  
Hip Hop Caucus  
Food and Water Watch  
Friends of the Earth  
Rachel Carson Council  
Alliance for Climate Education (ACE)  
Public Citizen  
350.org  
198 methods  
NC Environmental Justice Network  
Winston Salem NAACP  
Hollywood United  
Bonnie Raitt, Musician/Activist  
Guacamole Fund  
Morning Sun Foundation  
Beloved Community Center  
Concerned Citizens of Tillery  
Dogwood Alliance  
Appalachian Voices  
Clean Water for North Carolina  
Clean Air Carolina

North Carolina Coastal Federation  
Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League  
NC Climate Justice Summit  
NC APPPL (Alliance To Protect Our People  
and the Places We Live)  
350 Triangle  
350 Winston Salem  
350 Asheville  
350 Charlotte  
The Canary Coalition  
Crystal Coast Waterkeeper/Coastal Carolina  
Riverwatch  
Climate Reality Project: Triangle, NC Chapter  
UNC Asheville Divest  
Community Roots  
Chatham Research Group  
Triangle Women's International League for  
Peace and Freedom

*Additional endorsements after February 19:*

Americans Against Fracking  
Protecting Progress in Durham  
Climate Voices US  
Golden Egg Permaculture  
Moore Beatty Investments, LLC  
The Wakaboomee Adventure Traveling  
Education Program LLC  
Working Films  
Box Turtle Bakery  
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My NC Homes  
Forest City 350 Climate Coalition (Illinois)  
Elgin Green Groups 350 (Illinois)  
World Stewardship Institute  
National Religious Coalition on Creation Care  
ECO Committee of The Community Church of  
Chapel Hill Unitarian Universalist  
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