

**Example of an overture transmittal memo from a church to its presbytery. This one is for the fossil fuel overture. A separate one should be prepared for a different overture.**

Date

**To:** Clerk, (name of person)(name of presbytery)

**From:** (name of clerk of session or teaching elder member of the Presbytery), Session of (name of your church and city)

**Re:** Request for Sponsorship (if first presbytery considering the overture) or Concurrence with an Overture: Removal of Investments in and Subsidies for Fossil Fuels ( if multiple overtures, prepare a separate request for each)

Attached is an overture on “Removal of Investments in and Subsidies for Fossil Fuels”. This overture has been reviewed and sponsored or concurred with by the session at (name of church) or is being offered by Name a Teaching Elder member of Presbytery, and is being submitted for Presbytery review and sponsorship or concurrence. It must be received by the Office of General Assembly on or before May 11, 2024.

In order to meet that deadline, we are asking for it to be on the agenda for the (date of meeting) and thirty minutes be allocated for discussion. If necessary to meet the deadline a special meeting should be called. (Name of person from your church or Minister sponsor) will attend to present it and answer any questions.

(Briefly describe the request and rationale in each overture. Additional background information can be provided.)

**Overture:** This overture declares that the continued investment of funds by the PC(USA) denomination, affiliated institutions, congregations, presbyteries, and members in the fossil fuel industry is incompatible with the mission and goals of the PCUSA. It further calls for this industry to be put on the list of prohibited securities as described in the denomination’s 1984 Divestment Strategy. The Board of Pensions and the Presbyterian Foundation, as well as other church entities are strongly encouraged to align their investments with this declaration with all due speed and diligence. This overture also asks the US government to end all fossil fuel subsidies.

**Rationale:** We are in the midst of a climate crisis that is on the verge of undermining the entire web of life on this planet. The overwhelming global scientific consensus, has identified the production and burning of fossil fuels as the primary driver of this climate emergency with a rapidly closing window of time available to avert its worst consequences. As recently as December of last year at the 28<sup>th</sup> Conference of Parties to the U.N. Climate negotiations, the representatives of 200 nations of the world agreed that the world needs to phase out the use of fossil fuels. Over the past 15 years, Church groups and other organizations have divested

themselves of stock holdings amounting to over 40 trillion dollars in an effort to slow our slide into oblivion. As people of faith who seek to bear witness to our call as stewards of creation, it is high time the PC(USA), its members and institutions join this effort.

**Background:** The General Assembly in 2022 approved divestment from five fossil fuel companies. This left the denomination still invested in the fossil fuel industry. The 1984 Divestment Strategy policy provides for proscription of an entire class of firms. Given how fast the climate crisis is escalating, it is time to take this action and declare continued support of this industry with our investments violates our biblical charge to care for creation and is irretrievably incompatible with the mission and goals of the PCUSA.

Attachment (overture)