

Speaking Notes for GCSP: House of Commons Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainability

March 31, 2022: 7:00 – 8:30 PM EST

- I'm pleased to be invited to speak with the committee about the future of federal subsidies for the fossil fuel sector.
- With the passage of federal UNDRIP legislation, the Committee absolutely needs to hear directly from the Indigenous Peoples on whose lands the sector's activities are taking place.
- The *Implementing UNDRIP Act* recognizes the right of Nations to participate in the governance of their own territories and resources;
 - deciding how the federal government should subsidize the activities of the fossil fuel sector has direct implications on the needs and interests of those Nations, and the committee should make every attempt to include them in these proceedings.
- Representatives from the industry have certainly been given plenty of opportunity to make their concerns known here.
- We should remember that the fossil fuel industry has spent decades promoting misinformation about the safety of their activities and products, and delaying any meaningful government action that would have the effect of reducing their profits.

- So today we've reached a point where we have international consensus that every country, and especially the major oil-producing countries, need to make significant reductions in emissions very quickly.
- The obvious and most effective way to reduce emissions this decade is to reduce our production and use of fossil fuels, in part by eliminating public financial support of the sector as soon as possible.
- But the G20 has only committed to eliminate incredibly vague categories of subsidies: "inefficient" subsidies for "unabated" fossil fuels.
 - That leaves an incredible amount of wiggle room for the industry to continue fueling the climate crisis and delaying real emissions reductions.
- There's absolutely no reason to believe the industry's claims that they can increase production of oil and gas in Canada and pull emissions reductions out of a hat later, if only they had enough handouts to develop the technology to do so.
- The fossil fuel industry is one of the most influential groups in world history; they can certainly afford to make their emissions compliant with federal regulations without government handouts.
- If a few executives end up taking home a few million less every year so that their companies can afford to comply with the targets, then so be it.

- If smaller companies can't afford to operate in this sector under the emissions targets that we desperately need, then the federal government needs to give their workers a lifeboat to other industries to put their skills to work on a just transition.
- Enough is enough. The continued support for fossil fuels in any major economy is inexcusable.
- Hundreds of Canadians were cooked to death in their own homes last year, and we're seeing communities getting wiped off the map. We're in a crisis that is going to continue getting worse for decades even if we stopped the pumps tonight.
- It's not clear whether the government that's been in power for the last seven years has completely failed to understand the moral weight of their continued financing of this industry or if they just don't care.
- The Liberals have already given the oilpatch a pass on serious commitments in their latest *Emissions Reduction Plan* – they shouldn't give the industry a dollar more.