

Thousands of Feet Point Lansing toward Smaller Carbon Footprint

Earth Day event carpets Capitol in calls to stop CO2, dirty coal plants

April 22, 2008 LANSING – **A massive 150-foot-long petition painted with thousands of footprints covered a corner of the State Capitol today during an Earth Day rally that called on Lansing to walk away from dirty coal plants and carbon dioxide, and invest in clean energy instead.**

On Earth Day, the citizens of Michigan are rolling out the welcome mat for a clean energy future and sending Lansing the signal that we cannot go backwards with dirty coal plants,” Progress Michigan Executive Director Dan Farough said. “At a time when we must do everything in our power to protect our Great Lakes and reduce carbon dioxide, there are some in Lansing who want to build more dirty coal plants and put our future at risk. **We need a change, we need more clean renewable energy and we need to protect our precious natural resources for generations to come.**”

The citizens’ watchdog groups that form the Clean Energy Now coalition repeated their calls for Gov. Jennifer Granholm to sign an executive order to significantly curtail carbon dioxide emissions in Michigan. Clean Energy Now has collected thousands of signatures from citizens urging the governor to order the government to make carbon dioxide a factor in whether the state approves permits for future proposed dirty coal plants.

Today, the carpet that was rolled out on the Capitol steps was filled with thousands of footprints meant to symbolize the number of petition signatures that have already been gathered.

“We want to show the governor that the people of Michigan want less carbon dioxide, no new coal plants and a cleaner future for our children,” Michigan Clean Water Action’s Program Coordinator Becky Jo Farrington said. “On Earth Day, Michigan should send the signal that we put people and our Great Lakes before Big Coal and polluters.”

Sierra Club Executive Director Anne Woiwode said: “The people of Michigan are warning those in Lansing who want to go backward that we cannot afford to build new dirty coal plants that put our entire future at risk. We urge all our leaders to put Michigan jobs, Michigan’s Great Lakes and Michigan’s future first. We must change course, say no to dirty coal plants and invest in clean renewable energy.”

“Global warming is the most significant environmental and humanitarian emergency that our planet has ever faced and it’s already putting our precious Great Lakes at risk,” Farrington said. **“More dirty coal plants mean more greenhouse gases that threaten our citizens and our economy. We should turn away from more global warming coal-fired power plants and turn our state in the direction of clean, renewable energy.”**

Terry Miller of Lone Tree Council, a community based group fighting more coal plants in

Midland said: “We call on Gov. Granholm to join the citizens of Michigan in fighting global warming, reducing carbon dioxide and protecting our Great Lakes. She has the people on her side, she should act now to hold Big Coal accountable and she should make sure our Great State leads the way in clean renewable energy, not outdated and dangerous coal.”

Early in 2007, **Kansas Governor Kathleen Sebelius invoked a U.S. Supreme Court ruling in directing the state’s environmental agency to consider the negative impact of global warming CO2 emissions in air quality permit decisions for coal-burning power plants.** The action was the first time a Governor had invoked a Supreme Court ruling to crack down on CO2 pollution and comes as 59 other coal plants have been turned down or halted across country.

While other states are turning away from coal-burning, Michigan faces the construction of up to seven coal-fired plants that will unleash dangerous greenhouse gases.

Clean Energy Now coalition has also unveiled a ratepayer protection plan that aims to protect consumers from having to absorb the costs of bad, risky investments in more coal. Instead the coalition urges state leaders to turn in the direction of cutting-edge renewable energy and efficiency and bring these rapidly growing industries to Michigan.

To sign the petition, go to www.michigancleanenergynow.com.

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