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The Honourable Steven Guilbeault, P.C., M.P.  
Minister of Environment and Climate Change Canada  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0A6

September 26, 2022

### **Emission Caps for the Oil and Gas Sector**

Dear Minister Guilbeault:

We strongly urge the Government of Canada to set ambitious emissions caps for the oil and gas sector that will ensure that Canada does its fair share to fight global climate change.

As health professionals, we understand that climate change poses an existential threat to humanity. We are already seeing devastating climate-related health impacts around the world with the 2021 “heat dome” that claimed hundreds of lives in Canada; the 13 million people currently facing famine in the Horn of Africa; the 33 million displaced from their homes by floods in Pakistan; and the tens of millions impacted by heat waves and droughts in Europe, China and the United States over the last several months.

If the world is to prevent millions of climate change-related deaths, humanity must halve our greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2030. In fact, as a wealthy country that is one of the top ten emitters of GHGs, Canada should be making deeper cuts in GHGs and at a faster pace than other countries.

The oil and gas sector is the largest source of GHGs in Canada (27%). These emissions have increased steadily from 35 million tonnes (MT) in 2005 to 81 MT in 2020, and are expected to continue to increase for decades. While we recognize the important role that this sector currently plays in Canada’s economy, we can no longer afford to put those interests ahead of the stable climate and healthy ecosystems that are needed to sustain life on this planet.

Ambitious emission caps for the oil and gas sector would also produce immediate health benefits and healthcare savings for the communities that must implement them. An air monitoring study found that air pollution from the Alberta oil sands creates 45-84 tonnes/day of airborne particulate matter; a quantity that rivals the 67 tonnes/day created by the greater Toronto area. With air pollution producing 15,300 premature deaths/year in Canada, these emissions represent a significant health concern.

The production, distribution and use of oil and gas also releases methane, a climate pollutant that is 84 times more potent at warming the climate than carbon dioxide. Methane also contributes to the formation of ground-level ozone, a component of smog that aggravates asthma, increases premature deaths, and harms cognitive development and reproductive health.

There is also mounting evidence that hydraulic fracturing (fracking) for oil and gas poses health risks for local residents. A recent literature review found that 25 out of 29 studies linked negative health outcomes, such as adverse birth outcomes, to the fracking of oil and gas.

We call upon the Government of Canada to set ambitious limits on GHG emissions from the oil and gas sector. At a minimum, the oil and gas emissions cap must:

1. Reduce emissions significantly by 2025 and by 60% by 2030,
2. Be accompanied by tools that immediately ensure enforceability and accountability,
3. Be applied to all emissions from the production and use of oil and gas, and
4. Be supported by a Just Transition Strategy that creates millions of decent, low-carbon jobs, builds strong communities, and respects Indigenous rights and sovereignty.

We applaud the Government of Canada for the many steps it has taken to mitigate and prepare for climate change. However, if we are to leave our children a livable planet, we will need to move quickly to make steep reductions in emissions from every sector across the country, including the oil and gas sector.

Sincerely,



Kim Perrotta MHSc  
Executive Director, CHASE



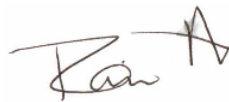
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cc: The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, P.C., M.P., Prime Minister  
The Honourable Chrystia Freeland, P.C., M.P., Deputy Prime Minister; Minister of Finance  
The Honourable Jonathan Wilkinson, P.C., M.P., Minister of Natural Resources  
The Honourable Jean-Yves Duclos, P.C., M.P., Minister of Health