

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

January 26, 2023

The Honorable John Kerry
Special Presidential Envoy for Climate
United States State Department
2201 C Street Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Special Presidential Envoy for Climate Kerry:

We are writing to urge you to push the United Arab Emirates to withdraw the appointment of Sultan Al Jaber, head of the Abu Dhabi National Oil Company, as President-designate of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Conference of Parties 28 (COP 28). The decision to name the chief executive of one of the world's largest oil and gas companies as president of the next U.N. Climate Change Conference risks jeopardizing climate progress from successive U.N. Climate Conferences. To help ensure that COP 28 is a serious and productive climate summit, we believe the United States should urge the United Arab Emirates to name a different lead for COP 28 or, at a minimum, seek assurances that it will promote an ambitious COP 28 aligned with the 1.5 degrees Celsius limit and Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) findings and take concrete steps to demonstrate domestic and regional leadership toward this end.

We know that you share our sense of urgency about the climate crisis, and that you understand the imperative of achieving significantly more progress on climate action at COP 28. The appointment of an oil company executive to head COP 28 poses a risk to the negotiation process as well as the whole conference itself. You are also well aware that the fossil fuel industry has already deeply tampered with UN climate negotiations. At least 636 fossil fuel lobbyists were granted access to COP 27 in Egypt in November 2022.¹ Having a fossil fuel champion in charge of the world's most important climate negotiations would be like having the CEO of a cigarette conglomerate in charge of global tobacco policy. It risks undermining the very essence of what is trying to be accomplished.


Furthermore, as some of us have urged,² future COPs should require any participating company to submit an audited corporate political influencing statement that discloses climate-related lobbying, campaign contributions, and funding of trade associations and organizations active on energy and climate issues. COPs should not provide a stage for greenwashing. They should be convenings for serious climate actors and actions. Such common sense reforms to help restore public faith in the COP process will obviously be impossible with an oil company executive at the helm. Some sign that there will be adequate disclosure of often-clandestine fossil fuel influence surrounding this COP will go along way, as you saw the reaction to the visible fossil fuel lobbying presence in Egypt.

¹ "636 Fossil Fuel Lobbyists Granted Access to COP27." Global Witness, Nov. 10, 2022, *available at* <https://www.globalwitness.org/en/campaigns/fossil-gas/636-fossil-fuel-lobbyists-granted-access-cop27/>.


² December 6, 2022 letter to Simon Stiell, Executive Secretary of the UNFCCC, *available at* <https://www.whitehouse.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/December%202022%20letter%20to%20UNFCCC%20and%20UNSG.pdf>.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue, and for your ongoing dedication and unmatched leadership in confronting the climate crisis. We ask you to consult with us on the steps you are taking to ensure that UAE delivers a COP that is ambitious and substantive, with domestic actions and commitments reflective of the unique responsibilities of a major oil and gas producing nation. We look forward to hearing back from you at your earliest convenience.


Sincerely,



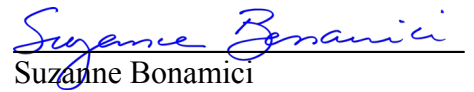
Jared Huffman
Member of Congress



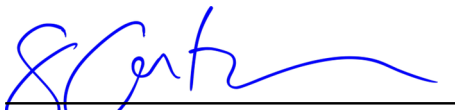
Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator



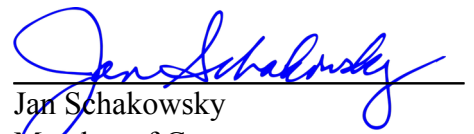
Rashida Tlaib
Member of Congress



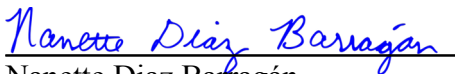
Suzanne Bonamici
Member of Congress



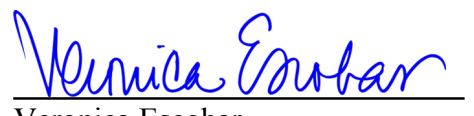
Sean Casten
Member of Congress




Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress

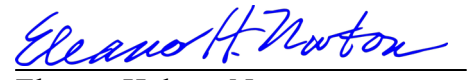



Nanette Diaz Barragán
Member of Congress



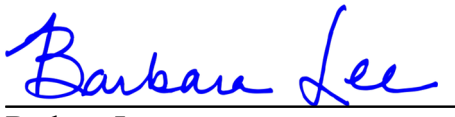
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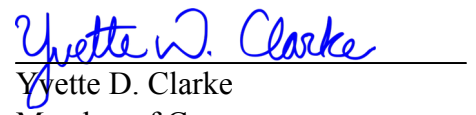

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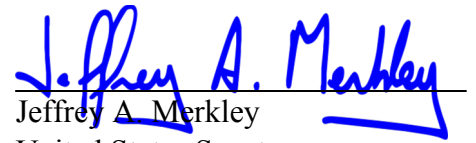

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Jamie Raskin
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Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator



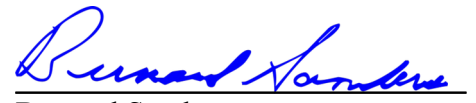
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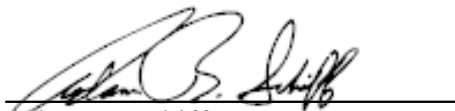
Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator




Dina Titus
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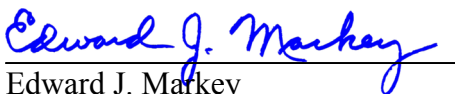
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United States Senator



Adam B. Schiff
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Mike Levin
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Edward J. Markey
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