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Boston-area college students vow to escalate call for schools to divest from fossil fuel industry

Posted by Matt Rocheleau December 10, 2013 02:30 PM

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By Matt Rocheleau, Boston.com Staff

More than 150 students from 10 Boston-area colleges rallied over the weekend calling for their schools to divest from the fossil fuel industry and vowing to hold more actions until campus leaders commit to divestment, according to organizers of the protest.

The group included students from Boston College, Boston University, Harvard, Tufts, Brandeis, Lesley and Northeastern universities, Wellesley and Olin colleges and MIT.

The protestors met Sunday afternoon on the Weeks Footbridge to unfurl a large banner over the Charles River that read "Divest from climate crisis."

Some students, including from Tufts and BC, then traveled to the homes of their campus presidents' to sing "divestment-themed holiday carols" to deliver letters announcing the students' intentions to escalate their campaign calling for fossil fuel divestment. At Harvard, students delivered a letter to the president's office.

"These actions mark a turning point in our movement and our campaigns are going to escalate," said a statement from Brandeis senior Rohan Bhatia. "Schools that have received direct and indirect rejections know that we need to increase pressure on our

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administrators to stand with their students rather than the fossil fuel industry.”

A **growing number** of students at higher education institutions across the country have been calling for fossil fuel divestment in recent months. Leaders of a handful of schools with relatively small endowments have committed to some form of divestment.

But, colleges and universities with wealthier endowments, **like Harvard**, have rejected the idea of divesting from fossil fuel companies, while others have not yet announced a decision.

“The lives and livelihoods of billions of people, present and future, will be devastated by the climate crisis unless we put our foot down now and work together to craft a livable future,” said a statement from Canyon Woodward, a Harvard junior who helped coordinate the events. “Fossil fuel divestment is about taking responsibility for our future and refusing to be passive participants in our own destruction.”

Matt Rocheleau can be reached at matthew.rocheleau@globe.com. Looking for more coverage of area colleges and universities? Go to our [Your Campus](#) pages.

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