



Talking points

Want to share information with your community, workplace, union or organization? These talking points can help you ground your messaging.

Our Pensions – Our Common Sense Investment Guidelines

Wisconsin Retirement System (WRS) members are organizing a campaign to shift our retirement savings out of increasingly risky fossil fuels. These investments threaten our financial security, as well as our water, our health, and our planet.

More than 650,000 people participate in the WRS, including current and retired employees of state agencies, most local governments and most school districts in Wisconsin. **The State of Wisconsin Investment Board (SWIB)** is the state agency responsible for investing the contributions made to the WRS by these employees and their employers to finance their retirements and other benefits. In addition to the WRS trust funds, SWIB also invests for several other state trust funds. At the end of 2021, it was managing over \$165.6 billion in assets.

Why should SWIB divest?

Fossil Fuels are financially risky investments.

Pension fund decision-makers have a fiduciary obligation to consider the financial risks of continuing to invest in fossil fuels --an uncertain and volatile industry.

Stranded assets are a real possibility, as fossil fuel companies will be left with oil fields that won't be developed and pipelines that won't be used.

Fossil Fuel investments are risking our water, the health of our planet, and the future of our children and grandchildren.

SWIB should consider the broader risks of climate change when making decisions regarding our pensions.

We don't want our pension dollars to be invested in dangerous fossil fuel companies, particularly ones that directly endanger Wisconsin.

For example, the dangerous oil pipelines owned by Canadian company Enbridge threaten Wisconsin's water, the Great Lakes, tribal treaty rights, and landowner property rights.

It is possible to safely divest from fossil fuels.

Over 1,500 institutions — representing over \$40 trillion in assets — have now committed to some level of fossil fuel divestment.

Other state pension funds, including Maine and New York, are moving out of fossil fuel investments while meeting their legal and fiduciary responsibilities.

It is time for SWIB to do the same for Wisconsin's pension fund.