

**Proposal to the Board of Trustees of Macalester College to  
Divest from Enbridge Energy in Protest of the Line 3 Oil  
Pipeline Expansion Project and to Strive for Financial  
Transparency with the Macalester Community**

By Sasha Lewis-Norelle '21 and Emma Harrison '21  
former members of Fossil Free Macalester

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## Executive Summary

The Line 3 pipeline replacement project threatens the wellbeing of Minnesota's communities, land, and water, and would contribute greatly to the increasingly harmful effects of global climate change. This tar sands pipeline would transport nearly one million barrels of oil per day, resulting in more carbon emissions than the entire state currently emits. Due to Enbridge's history of catastrophic oil spills, this project presents a clear threat to the water bodies and wetland ecosystems it would tunnel through. Line 3 particularly threatens traditional Anishinaabe lands across the state, disregarding treaty rights that should protect them. Pipeline construction itself poses a further threat to Indigenous communities as the epidemic of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and Relatives is directly correlated with the temporary influx of pipeline construction workers to rural communities. This pipeline is both an environmental hazard and a threat to Indigenous sovereignty.

The Line 3 expansion project has faced fierce resistance since it was proposed in 2014. Indigenous leaders backed by thousands of supporters around the state have intervened at every point in the permitting process to try and stop Line 3. After years of resistance, state and federal regulators granted Enbridge Energy the final permits they needed to begin construction on Line 3 near the end of last year. Although construction began on the route in November of 2020, the resistance movement is not backing down. Indigenous leaders and allies have delayed construction with powerful direct action and civil disobedience every week since construction began, and there are still significant legal appeals to Enbridge's permits that the state has yet to hear in court. The movement to stop Line 3 is only growing, with supporters from around the country traveling to Minnesota to stop construction directly, or appealing to President Joe Biden to stop Line 3 as he did with Keystone XL.

Many members of the Macalester community have been deeply involved with the movement to stop Line 3 from the start. Over the past 7 years, students, faculty, alumni, and staff have participated in and organized protests, coordinated legal appeals, advocated to local, state, and federal government officials, organized popular education about the pipeline, and much more to support the Line 3 resistance movement. Since construction began, our community has only deepened its resolve to stopping this pipeline. Dozens of students and alumni have attended Line 3 protests and participated in other forms of grassroots advocacy. Several students have even been arrested in recent weeks, risking their freedom and safety to protest along the pipeline route.

Despite the powerful resistance, Enbridge is clearcutting and trenching through more land, and encroaching on Indigenous sovereignty every day across Northern Minnesota. The situation is dire. To stop Line 3, we need every individual and institution to join the movement.

Right now, Macalester has an opportunity to support this historic grassroots resistance campaign and the broader movement for climate justice. **We are calling on Macalester's Board of Trustees and other campus leadership to publicly denounce the Line 3 pipeline replacement project and to support that statement with immediate divestment**

**from Enbridge Energy.** Beyond these initial asks, we further ask that the Board strive to be more transparent about Macalester's investments. The limited dialogue that we, as members of Fossil Free Macalester, were able to have with the Board and other administrators fostered rich and informed advocacy on our part, but we believe that the institution should be doing more to engage students transparently and respectfully in questions and concerns they have about the school's investments. We, for example, never knew for sure that Macalester was invested in the Line 3 pipeline despite our consistent engagement with the Trustees. We were disappointed when we recently found a publicly disclosed 990T form listing a Limited Partnership that Macalester holds with Enbridge Energy, when we were under the impression that the school did not have to disclose any specific investments and thus never would. This divestment proposal is not only about doing the ethical thing and standing strong against the harmful Line 3 pipeline project. It is also about supporting the deep advocacy the Macalester community has done for that resistance movement, and deepening relationships between the Board, students, and all others in the Macalester community.

## **First, a land acknowledgement**

*"We ask that you take a moment to honor that we are on Dakota land. Macalester is situated on the ancestral homeland of the Dakota people, particularly the Sisseton and Wahpeton bands, who were forcibly exiled from the land because of aggressive and persistent settler colonialism. We make this acknowledgement to honor the Dakota people, ancestors and descendants, as well as the land itself."*<sup>1</sup>

Macalester college was built on Indigenous land and has contributed to and benefitted from that "persistent settler colonialism." The land that Macalester is built on is not incidentally Dakota land. Rather, the school was founded during the early settler colonial period for the purpose of spreading Protestantism West.<sup>2</sup> We would like to acknowledge that student activists and journalists at Macalester, and particularly Indigenous student activists, have done incredible work to illuminate so much of our school's dark history.<sup>3</sup> A central figure in the school's past is Edward Duffield Neill, who was not only a virulent racist but a self-fashioned "anthropologist," that actively desecrated Dakota culture and history during his career.<sup>4</sup> Over the decades, Macalester has operated on this land with scarcely a recognition of its history and their role in dispossessing it. As recently as the 1960s

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<sup>1</sup> Barbara Kuzma, "DML Land Acknowledgement created this summer," *The Mac Weekly*, October 11, 2018, <https://thamacweekly.com/75018/uncategorized/dml-land-acknowledgement-created-this-summer/>.

<sup>2</sup> Jeanne Halgren Kilde, *Nature and Revelation: A History of Macalester College*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010).

<sup>3</sup> "Colonial Macalester: A Mac Weekly special issue," *The Mac Weekly*, October 31, 2019, <https://thamacweekly.com/category/neill-hall/>.

<sup>4</sup> Emma Nelson, "Macalester to remove controversial founder's from campus building," *The Star Tribune*, November 18, 2019, <https://www.startribune.com/macalester-to-remove-controversial-founder-s-name-from-campus-building/565115312/>.

Macalester acquired the Katharine Ordway Natural History Study Area, a large swath of land that is home to several Dakota cultural sites which have also only been acknowledged thanks to student advocacy.<sup>5</sup> We offer this grounding at the opening of our proposal because the Line 3 resistance movement is about challenging ongoing settler colonization. It is about upholding the treaties that settlers hold with ancient stewards of this land. It is about supporting Indigenous leaders who are calling on allies and those in power to help keep the land, the water, and all people healthy and safe. The Line 3 resistance movement is about taking meaningful action to prevent further harm, not just acknowledging that harm has happened. By denouncing Line 3 and divesting from Enbridge Energy, Macalester can withdraw their support for that violent project and take a step towards accounting for the harm our institution has caused.

### **The Line 3 Tar Sands Pipeline**

Since the Line 3 tar sands expansion project was proposed in 2014, Indigenous communities and grassroots climate justice organizers have resisted its construction through Northern Minnesota. Enbridge began operating the original Line 3 pipeline in 1968. Since then, it has transported oil from the Athabasca oil sands region of Alberta, Canada to the Husky refinery in Superior, Wisconsin. After over 50 years in operation, the old Line 3 has deteriorated and consistently leaks small quantities of oil into the ground and watersheds along the route. In 2014, Enbridge proposed to replace the old pipeline with an expanded Line that would transport more tar sands oil every day. This sparked immediate pushback and protest from Indigenous communities and their allies in the climate justice movement, citing concerns about the climate impacts and potential water pollution, as well as the threats from fossil fuel infrastructure projects like pipelines to Native peoples, land, and sovereignty.

Emissions from the oil transported through the Line 3 pipeline threatens the future of our climate. The Environmental Impact Statement from the Minnesota Department of Commerce indicates that over the next 30 years, Line 3 would create \$287 billion in climate damage.<sup>6</sup> The carbon emissions from the oil Line 3 would transport are projected to be the equivalent of constructing 50 new coal-powered energy plants.<sup>7</sup> Tar sands is a uniquely carbon-intensive energy source that requires a great deal of energy to extract and refine. The movement to stop Line 3 has called for state and federal regulators, as well as fossil fuel financiers, to halt this project to push the world economy away from continued extraction and burning of tar sands. If humanity burned all the Canadian tar sands oil deposits, it would emit twice as much carbon dioxide as has been burned yet in human history.<sup>8</sup> Building a multibillion-dollar infrastructure project that locks our energy industry into decades more use

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<sup>5</sup> Liam McMahon, "The history of this land," *The Mac Weekly*, October 31, 2019, <https://themacweekly.com/76861/neill-hall/the-history-of-this-land/>.

<sup>6</sup> Scott Russell, "The Battle Against Line 3," *The Progressive*, 83 (2019): 24–28.

<sup>7</sup> Russell, "The Battle Against Line 3."

<sup>8</sup> James Hansen, "Game Over for the Climate," *The New York Times*, May 9, 2012, <https://www.nytimes.com/2012/05/10/opinion/game-over-for-the-climate.html>.

of tar sands is antithetical to the rapid transition away from burning fossil fuels that the world needs to mitigate global climate catastrophe.

In particular, the Line 3 pipeline would threaten the health of water ecosystems in Minnesota. While constructing Line 3, Enbridge would have to cross dozens of miles of sensitive wetland ecosystems and more than 200 water bodies, including the headwaters of the Mississippi river. This construction process would threaten the health and stability of hundreds of ecosystems in Minnesota. Furthermore, activists in the movement to stop Line 3 have ample reason to be concerned about the potential harm from an oil spill along the Line 3 pipeline route. The Environmental Impact Statement of Line 3 acknowledges that some accidental release of oil is inevitable and that serious oil spills are possible.<sup>9</sup> Enbridge is regularly responsible for catastrophic oil spills, including the 2010 oil spill in Kalamazoo, Michigan and the largest ever inland oil spill in the US in 1991 in Grand Rapids, Minnesota on the old Line 3 route. Public data shows that between 1999-2010 Enbridge caused 804 spills releasing 161,475 barrels of oil.<sup>10</sup> Oil spills at any scale cause significant, long-term harm to the finite water ecosystems we need to live. Invoking the lineage of the Dakota Access Pipeline protests of 2016, many in the Line 3 resistance movement call themselves “water protectors” and remind us that, in the traditional language of the Ojibwe, Mni Wiconi, “water is life.”

The Line 3 pipeline project disregards Anishinaabe treaty rights and the sovereignty of Indigenous peoples. All of Northern Mni Sota is Native land. In the 19th century, settler colonists representing the US Government negotiated treaties with the Anishinaabe people to open those lands up for settlement and industry. Through those treaties, the Anishinaabe preserved their right to hunt, fish, and gather on their lands. Although the US has persistently attempted to deny Indigenous peoples their sovereign rights, the Supreme Court upheld Anishinaabe usufructuary rights in 1999. Line 3 threatens the health of those protected lands and waters. In particular, the new Line 3 pipeline route crosses dozens of manoomin (wild rice) lakes. Manoomin is a sacred cultural plant and a traditional food source for the Anishinaabe. While an oil spill in any of those unique ecosystems could damage them irrevocably, construction alone will disrupt them. Registered Chippewa Tribes in Minnesota have appealed the pipeline in court, citing these and other threats to their lands and way of life. Beyond the courts, Anishinaabe water protectors lead the movement to stop Line 3 on the frontlines and in every other avenue for resistance.

Pipeline construction is correlated with an increase in cases of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and Relatives. To construct Line 3, Enbridge has hired thousands of temporary, largely out-of-state workers. These construction employees live in temporary

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<sup>9</sup> Minnesota Department of Commerce, “Chapter 10 - Accidental Crude Oil Releases,” *Energy Environmental Review and Analysis: Final Environmental Impact Statement Line 3 Project*, August 17, 2017, <https://mn.gov/commerce/energyfacilities/resource.html?Id=34735>.

<sup>10</sup> National Wildlife Federation, “Enbridge Over Troubled Water: The Enbridge GXL System’s Threat to the Great Lakes,” February 22, 2016, <http://80feetisenough.org/uploads/documents/Enbridge%20Over%20Troubled%20Water%20Report.pdf>.

housing known as “man camps,” which are set up along the pipeline route across rural northern Minnesota and through several Anishinaabe communities. In December of 2020, the Minnesota Taskforce on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women (MMIW) named these man camps as being directly tied to epidemic of human trafficking that disproportionately impacts Native communities.<sup>11</sup> The initial Environmental Impact Statement for Line 3 also identified this threat saying, “The addition of a temporary, cash-rich workforce increases the likelihood that sex trafficking or sexual abuse will occur.”<sup>12</sup> Indigenous activists in the Line 3 movement have called on state regulatory bodies to stop this pipeline from being built to help protect their women, girls, and other relatives from this horrific violence.

Construction of the Line 3 pipeline threatens the wellbeing of Minnesota's people, land, and water, and will contribute to the expansion of the fossil fuel industry at a time where we need to rapidly transition away from burning carbon for energy. The Line 3 resistance movement has given us all a tremendous opportunity. By challenging fossil fuel infrastructure projects, and the notion that the extraction and burning of carbon should continue unabated, water protectors ask us all to take a stand for the future of the world we want to live in. The Line 3 pipeline poses great risk, both in the immediate stage of construction, and over the decades of industry that will follow. Stopping Line 3 is the just and courageous thing to do.

### **Stopping Line 3 matters to the Macalester Community**

Many members of the Macalester community have been deeply committed to the movement to stop Line 3 over the past 7 years. Over the years members of our community have led trainings and teach-ins about the pipeline across the state and around the country. They have contributed to the legal appeals process and scrutinized every permit issued to Enbridge in court. They have coordinated mutual aid supply drives to share resources with the Indigenous leaders on the frontlines of the resistance. They have advocated to local, state, and federal politicians to Stop Line 3. They have designed and shared beautiful protest art to help raise awareness of the harms this pipeline would cause. Some members of our community are even living on the frontlines, directly supporting Indigenous-led resistance, and several have been arrested risking their safety to stop construction of this harmful project. Writing as just two individuals, we wanted to uplift the voices of a few of the other people from the Macalester community who are dedicated to stopping Line 3:

“As an Anishinaabekwe (ojibwe woman) this pipeline will have a direct effect on my ancestral lands as well as the people in my home community of the White Earth Nation.

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<sup>11</sup> Nicole Martin Rogers and Virginia Pendleton, “Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women Task Force: A Report to the Minnesota Legislature” (Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women Task Force, December 2020), <https://dps.mn.gov/divisions/ojp/Documents/missing-murdered-indigenous-women-task-force-report.pdf>.

<sup>12</sup> Minnesota Department of Commerce, “Chapter 13 - Environmental Justice,” *Energy Environmental Review and Analysis: Final Environmental Impact Statement Line 3 Project*, August 17, 2017, <https://mn.gov/commerce/energyfacilities/resource.html?Id=34735>.

While it may not be easy for those who are not familiar with these sacred lands to understand the genocidal impacts pipelines have I can tell you this will affect my life, my sister's life, and many people I love and care for. I worry about the man camps and what might happen to my cousins who range in the ages of 10-13. I worry about not being able to harvest important plant medicine in the areas the pipeline will go through. I worry we will lose our wild rice which has been fought for and protected for years and years. This pipeline is senseless and we will not remain silent in opposition of this genocidal practice. By not standing in opposition to line 3 you too are complicit in this act of indigenous erasure.”

Zoe Allen, Class of 2022

“Line 3 is a climate, environmental, and social justice disaster. It's one of the most carbon intensive projects in Minnesota history, with associated emissions more than the entire state, 5 times the emissions of the total Minnesota electricity emissions, and 5 times the total transportation emissions. A major oil spill would have a devastating effect on sensitive ecosystems up north, and Enbridge does not have a good record on oil spills. This project is a major threat to lands and waters that are essential to Indigenous livelihoods and culture, lands where Anishanaabe have hunting, fishing, and wild rice gathering rights guaranteed by treaty. The project is opposed by all major environmental groups. Our own Department of Commerce says Line 3 will not serve the energy needs of Minnesota and is challenging the permits in court. This is another blatant example of a corporation getting its way over the interests of Native communities and the environment. Action on divestment is needed immediately. Construction has already started and water protectors are being arrested and jailed for peaceful demonstrations. Macalester cannot knowingly be a financial supporter of this project and also claim that it stands for the environment and social justice. Supporting this project diminishes our credibility as environmental and equity champions. By divesting, the College will use its social capital to inspire other institutions to put the well-being of people and the environment before corporate profits.”

Jim Doyle, Professor of Physics and Astronomy

“It takes courage to genuinely bear witness to the harm that is being done not only to the land but also to the people who call this land home. I felt betrayed to learn of Macalester's continuing investment in the Enbridge Corporation, especially following the Board's promising divestment announcement last year. By maintaining our investments in the Line 3 project, our community is made complicit in its deadly consequences. It is hypocritical of Macalester to market itself as a school for “agents of change” while simultaneously using its wealth to aid in the desecration of sacred sites, the polluting of our water, and the harm to countless Indigenous relatives. As

someone who, through my place at Macalester, has been given the privilege of getting to call Minnesota home, I beg you to divest.”

Andrew Lee, Class of 2023

“Divesting from Enbridge and the Line 3 pipeline is one of the most powerful and necessary acts that Macalester, as an institution, can take right now. It is utterly paradoxical for Mac to promote sustainability goals like zero waste and carbon neutrality while simultaneously investing in a company that will be the direct cause of CO2 emissions greater than the yearly emissions of the entire state of Minnesota. It is impossible for Macalester to be a credible advocate for, or example of, ethical behavior while also investing in a company that has been documented lying to state officials, received numerous worksite citations, and refuses to even provide basic documentation like a demand forecast for the oil it intends to sell.

Pipeline construction is happening every day—just a few hours drive from campus, indigenous people and allies are putting their bodies on the line to protect Minnesota’s ecosystems, indigenous treaties, and the health and safety of its residents. Some of these water protectors are part of the Macalester community. They are leaders in the fight for climate justice. But Mac can’t take credit for teaching and encouraging that leadership without also taking responsibility for the ways the college has played a role in climate injustice by investing in destructive tar sands oil. It’s time for Mac to put its full institutional weight behind the values it teaches. The time to divest is now.”

Julia Evelyn, Class of 2020 Alumni

“Enbridge is actively building Line 3 right now. So many members of the Macalester community realize that stopping this genocidal pipeline is absolutely critical, and yet our institution continues to invest in Enbridge. Investment in this pipeline is unethical, harmful, and hypocritical. By divesting from Enbridge and its associated companies, Macalester could take a stand against Line 3 and inspire other institutions to do the same.”

Charlee Gorham, Class of 2021

"Macalester College bills itself as 'a force for positive change,' and as a leading liberal arts institution situated in the vibrant and active Twin Cities, it *should* be exactly that. Unfortunately, maintaining investments in Enbridge Energy, a fossil fuel corporation currently bulldozing the sacred treaty territory of the Anishinaabe people to construct a tar sands oil pipeline that would have the climate impact equivalent to 50 new coal plants, aligns Macalester not with positive social change but with the continued colonial extraction and climate denial that undergird the Line 3 pipeline. Macalester's financial support of Enbridge is a stinging betrayal to the many professors, students, and alumni



who have testified and organized against Line 3, and antithetical to the college's mission to promote multiculturalism and social justice. Macalester has the opportunity to lead in this moment and divest from Enbridge, divest from Line 3, and align itself as an institution with climate justice."

Akilah Sanders-Reed, Class of 2016 Alumni

Macalester College prides itself on its service to society, its multiculturalism and international reach. Institutions like ours carry an immense amount of responsibility in how we execute our commitments. There has been widespread outcry from environmental groups, Indigenous communities, and governmental bodies over the Line 3 pipeline. Macalester students are literally putting their personal safety and livelihoods on the line to stand for what they believe in. That commitment to one's values is rich in Macalester's history. As an international student I have seen the devastating global impacts left by these extractive industries. As an example to the communities we serve, as the responsibility of an institution that profits off of settler colonialism, as an homage to the environment we inhabit, and as assurance to the future generations: Macalester must divest from Enbridge."

Likhwa Ndlovu, Class of 2021

"As a Kanaka Maoli wahine (Native Hawaiian woman), the desecration of indigenous lands and waterways caused by Line 3 has been felt deeply, both physically and spiritually. I'd challenge you to find an indigenous person who has not felt the same grief, and at times rage, while watching the trees being ripped from the land, or the elders being dragged away in zip ties. As a Macalester student, I was taught that global citizenship meant taking responsibility for our actions as all peoples are connected, and right now Macalester's actions are impacting our northern relatives ability to carry on as indigenous peoples. Their legal treaty rights continue to be ignored, waterways polluted, and access to their ancestral lands cut off. It is not enough to briefly remind ourselves of our colonial impacts each time we read off a land acknowledgement, believing we've met our obligations and have been absolved of our history. As a Macalester staff member, I wish to truthfully affirm to future students who have fallen in love with Macalester's core values, that our community is upholding those values in and out of the classroom. Environmental and human rights issues are at the forefront of the youths' minds and they deserve a school that not only teaches them the tools to be leaders and advocates, but will also stand with them as they try to leave the world better than they found it. Ending relations with Enbridge Energy would show that as a community we believe in what we teach, an education and world rooted in justice and integrity."

Makaya Kekoa Resner, Class of 2019 Alumni and Admissions Staff

While dozens of people in our community are fighting to stop Line 3 in any way they can, Macalester's leadership has an opportunity to stand up for what is right, to oppose this catastrophic project, and to divest their support from it immediately.

## **Our Ask**

### **Denounce Line 3**

Demonstrate institutional support for climate justice, and the members of the Macalester community dedicated to the Line 3 resistance movement, by issuing a public statement condemning Enbridge's Line 3 tar sands pipeline replacement project.

### **Divest from all liquid holdings in Enbridge Energy**

To back up the public statement denouncing Line 3, divest the school's current equity and other liquid holdings in Enbridge Energy. As you instruct third party asset managers to undertake this process, be clear with them that Macalester is divesting from Enbridge in protest of the Line 3 tar sands pipeline project.

### **Foster transparent dialogue with the Mac community about the school's investments**

Open up honest and participatory dialogue with students, faculty, staff, and alumni by being more transparent about the management of the endowment, its function in the school's operations, the types of investments we hold, and the industries we are invested in, however harmful.

## **Why immediate divestment from Enbridge matters**

Construction of Line 3 began in November of 2020 in spite of appeals from a broad coalition of groups in the movement which have yet to be heard in court. At the end of 2020, both state and federal regulatory bodies issued Enbridge the last permits they needed to begin construction on the Line 3 tar sands pipeline. However, there are numerous pending legal appeals of the project including from Anishinaabe communities in Minnesota, from a group of young people, including two Macalester alumni, known as the Youth Climate Intervenors who are concerned about their future, from grassroots climate justice organizations, and even from Minnesota's own Department of Commerce. Several of these parties filed for a stay on construction pending those appeals at both the state and federal level. However, the Minnesota court of appeals and a federal district court denied both motions for an injunction, allowing construction to continue despite the serious harm the pipeline poses to Indigenous communities. While these significant legal appeals are working their way slowly through the courts, construction is raging forward every day.

Construction of the Line 3 pipeline is already harming Minnesota's land and people. To construct Line 3, or the "pandemic pipeline," Enbridge has brought hundreds of out of state workers to live and move around in rural northern Minnesota communities that were

already being deeply impacted by the spread of COVID-19.<sup>13</sup> Another central concern about pipeline projects is the increased trafficking of Indigenous women, girls, and two-spirit individuals associated with construction. Although data about this sort of violence is notoriously difficult to track, the correlation between “man camps,” the temporary encampments of workers set up for construction, and human trafficking are well documented. If construction continues, this unspeakable violence against Indigenous communities is inevitable. Lastly, pipeline construction erodes ecosystems along the corridor. To build Line 3, Enbridge has already begun to clear cut miles of forest and disturbed sensitive wetland ecosystems. Construction of the Line 3 pipeline is already causing harm every day.

With a vibrant movement for climate justice growing within our state, and many from the Macalester community dedicating themselves to it, it is wrong for Macalester to remain invested in Enbridge Energy. Some on the Board of Trustees might call this proposal “symbolic” divestment and question the efficacy of this action to challenge the financing of the Line 3 pipeline. We acknowledge that the relatively small sum of money that Macalester invests in Enbridge is not likely to destabilize the financing of the Line 3 project on its own. However, as a prominent institution known for its deep moral convictions, Macalester denouncing Line 3 and divesting from Enbridge would advance conversations in higher education about meaningful action schools can take to support student activism and the movement for climate justice. Further, Line 3 is not an abstract project impacting communities far removed from us. This resistance movement is happening in our backyard. By publicly condemning Line 3 and divesting from Enbridge, Macalester would amplify an Indigenous-led movement within our state, raising awareness about the harms the pipeline is causing and demonstrating meaningful solidarity. Given Macalester’s legacy of benefiting from settler colonization, it is our responsibility to use our outsized influence to challenge the continuation of that harm. Additionally, this proposal is not just about efficacy, it is about justice. Choosing to stay invested in Enbridge while people across Minnesota, around the country, and especially on our own campus are calling on those in power to help us stop Line 3, is the choice to fund harm to Indigenous communities, the land, the water, and all people facing the threat of global climate change. The Board and the rest of Macalester’s leadership has a chance to take a stand. They must denounce the Line 3 pipeline project and support that symbolic statement with material change.

### **On transparency and respectful engagement with students**

We were disappointed to find publicly available 990T tax forms listing Macalester’s direct investment in Enbridge Energy. During our time organizing with Fossil Free Macalester, we had assumed that the institution was likely invested to some extent in Line 3. Enbridge is, after all, one of the largest energy transfer companies in the world. What was

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<sup>13</sup> Emily Holden, “A huge oil pipeline is coming to Minnesota – and with it the risk of Covid,” *The Guardian*, December 4, 2020. <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2020/dec/04/minnesota-pipeline-aitkin-county-enbridge-coronavirus>

disappointing then, was not merely this harmful investment, but that we had to find this document on our own through a research tool provided by the divestment movement, instead of it being presented to us transparently by the Board of Trustees during our years of advocacy to them. During numerous conversations with members of the Board and finance employees we asked for more specific information regarding Macalester's investments. Over the years, however, Fossil Free Mac was given the strong impression that Macalester was not required to disclose any of its investments and thus would not share any specificity about those investments with us. After having developed what we believed were meaningful relationships with some Board members and other individuals in the administration, it was hurtful to realize that some of our most pressing questions had been evaded.

Keeping Macalester's finances opaque alienates students. As organizers with the Fossil Free Mac campaign, we were given much more access to conversations with the Board and other administrators about our institution's investments than most students are. However, our audiences with the Board were hard won. We had to advocate for years before being granted the opportunity to present to the full Board, and we spent hours researching and strategizing about how to earn time speaking to people who are ostensibly part of our shared community. Over the years of our campaign, we spoke much more with other members of the Macalester community, particularly students. Students have deep questions about Macalester's finances. They often asked us who controlled the endowment, how they could get in touch with the Board, and why we were not allowed to know what the school was invested in. At first, most people were completely in the dark about Macalester's large investment fund. After learning about it, they shared our frustrations about not being able to look closely at this crucial component of the institution. Students in our community feel mistrustful of the Board and wary of how the endowment is managed. They have rigorous questions they would like to ask our leadership. Yet even those of us that managed to develop relationships with Board members were not granted much more insight and are left, a couple years after the conclusion of our campaign, feeling similarly alienated.

The Board of Trustees must engage the Macalester student body with respect, transparency, and openness, particularly around investments. We understand that there are some legal limitations regarding transparency and non-disclosure around institutional investments. We also recognize that Macalester works with numerous third-party asset management firms that make it difficult to know exactly what we are invested in and by how much at any given moment. However, the Board could approach students with a culture of transparency and openness around their work by sharing what can be shared and seeking to answer students' questions when they are asked. The current lack of communication between students and the Trustees makes it feel as though the Board is purposefully limiting their contact with students. Instead, the Board could intentionally engage students in dialogue around the school's investments and open themselves up to rigorous questions. Dr. Wheaton gives public facing presentations about the school's budget every year; perhaps the Board and Investment Committee could offer something similar about the endowment as well. The

conversations we were able to have directly with Trustees as part of Fossil Free Macalester were a small step in the right direction, but the Board should routinely engage the student body in conversations about their work both fiduciary or otherwise.

The Board must engage future student advocacy with consistent respect and open minds. To reiterate, we are grateful for the engagement the Board of Trustees showed us at points throughout the Fossil Free Macalester campaign. However, that relationship was never assured, often hard to access, and still resulted in the feeling of a vast rift between us and the financial decisions made on behalf of our institution. When future student advocacy groups approach the Board, they should be engaged directly and treated with respect. We also feel that it is important to acknowledge that our advocacy focused on a palatable divestment ask: many schools have divested fully from fossil fuels, and divestment has been acknowledged by others in the finance sector, not only for its contributions to fighting global climate change, but also for its positive effect on returns. There are plenty of other concerns that students could raise to the Trustees in upcoming years, whether about investments or otherwise. At points throughout the Fossil Free Mac campaign, both Trustees and other campus leaders thanked us for our advocacy. They said it strengthened the college to openly discuss the challenging questions divestment posed. We agree. If future students ask about Macalester's investments in policing and prisons, the Board should do their best to answer those questions. If others call on the Board to divest from the Israeli occupation in Palestine, the Trustees should engage their advocacy directly. When students ask rigorous questions and confront Macalester's relationship to harmful industries or institutions our school will evolve for the better. When the trustees engage those students with respect and openness, they will take a step towards ameliorating the alienation many students feel from the school's leadership.

## **Conclusion**

As construction continues to accelerate, the fight against Line 3 is incredibly urgent. People are being called to travel up north to put their bodies and liberty on the line to protest this harmful project. Indigenous and other local communities do not have a choice to ignore the harm being caused all around them. Members of the Macalester community have been showing up on the frontlines, in the cities, and in the halls of power to resist this pipeline however they can. Line 3 threatens the wellbeing of Minnesota's communities, particularly the Anishinaabe people whose land should be protected under treaty rights for posterity. This pipeline threatens the land, it threatens the water, it is a climate disaster, and we must do everything in our power to stop it, both as individuals and collectively.

The Board of Trustees and other administrators, as leaders of Macalester College, have an incredible opportunity to stand with the brave people fighting this pipeline on the ground and to support the Indigenous led movement for climate justice by denouncing Line 3 and divesting immediately from Enbridge Energy. They must join the many members of the Macalester community who are dedicating themselves to the movement to stop Line 3. They

must take a stand for the climate, for the land, for the water, and for all humanity as we face the threat of global climate change together.

Regardless of how the Board chooses to proceed on the issue of Line 3, they must strive for respectful and transparent conversation with the Macalester community about our institutional investments. The student body deserves the respectful engagement of our administration when they express concerns about how our money is being invested. Engaging the community in more transparent dialogue will foster healthy dialogue and productive collaboration that will strengthen the institution as a whole.