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July 9 2021

His Worship John Tory
Mayor, City of Toronto
100 Queen St. W.
City Hall, Second floor, West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Re: Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty

Dear Sir,

I have been very heartened by the City of Toronto's commitment to the global effort to mitigate the effects of climate change. I am writing now, in my capacity as a practicing physician and resident of the Toronto-Danforth riding, to urge you and council to bring that same commitment to the support of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty. I understand that a formal motion in support of this initiative is scheduled for vote within the coming week. In considering whether the City of Toronto should endorse this treaty, please note the following:

- Air pollution arising from vehicular emissions within city boundaries is responsible for approximately premature 250-300 deaths and over 1000 hospitalizations each year.¹ This is approximately three times the number of people who die each year from homicide and twice the number who are victims of gun violence.²
- Traffic-related pollution is a significant cause of asthma in children and is associated with the development of cardiovascular disease and lung cancer in adults.³
- Traffic congestion, in addition to being economically ruinous due to decreased productivity, also increases the risk of emissions exposure to the commuters themselves, as slower travel times also increases time spent breathing in toxins and particulate matter.³

In addition, the ongoing generation of greenhouse emissions from the burning of fossil fuels around the world will have widespread health effects that will directly affect us here, many of which are already becoming apparent:⁴

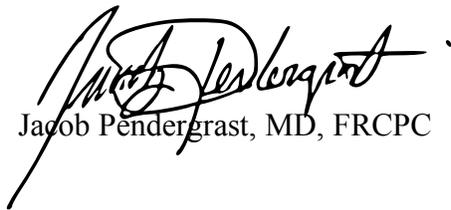
- Injuries and fatalities from extreme weather events
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- Greater incidence of water-borne diseases caused by toxic algal blooms and enteric pathogens such as cholera and cryptosporidiosis
- Proliferation of disease-causing vectors such as mosquitoes and ticks

Indeed, the World Health Organization is now naming climate change as one of the largest global health threats of the next decade.⁵

A letter from the City of Toronto to the Federal Government requesting its support of the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty is a small but meaningful step we can take locally to help protect the health and security of the citizens of this city. When the motion endorsing this treaty is brought before city council next week, please vote yes

Yours sincerely,



Jacob Pendergrast, MD, FRCPC

Cc: Councillor Paula Fletcher, Ward 30 (Toronto-Danforth)
Lyn Adamson, ClimateFast, Toronto

¹ Toronto Public Health. Path to Healthier Air: Toronto Air Pollution Burden of Illness Update. Technical Report. April 2014

² Toronto Police Public Safety Data Portal (<http://data.torontopolice.on.ca>, accessed February 11th 2019)

³ Public Health Ontario. Traffic-Related Air Pollution: Avoiding the TRAP Zone (https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/eRepository/OHP_infog_TRAP_2016.pdf, accessed February 11th 2019)

⁴ Haines A et al. The Imperative for Climate Action to Protect Health. N Engl J Med. 2019 Jan 17;380(3):263-273

⁵ <https://www.who.int/news-room/photo-story/photo-story-detail/urgent-health-challenges-for-the-next-decade>