

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Top scientists, writers and academics sign open letter backing nuclear to tackle climate change

OTTAWA, November 5, 2018 – A distinguished and prominent group of Canadians and international men and women today released the text of an Open Letter to Canadians they will publish later this week in support of urgent action to reduce carbon emissions, including the need for next-generation nuclear technology to be part of the mix.

“Despite a vocal but dwindling ‘anti-nuke’ contingent stuck in last century’s political battles,” said David Schumacher, a signatory of the letter and organizer of the initiative, “these innovative nuclear power efforts deserve the support of government, industry, and all Canadians. Without nuclear it is going to be impossible to tackle climate change, so everyone has a stake in the success of these efforts.”

Mr. Schumacher is an Emmy-winning Canadian filmmaker, whose documentary, “[The New Fire](#),” makes the case for next-generation nuclear to battle climate change.

The Open Letter is signed by 25 influential individuals, including prominent Canadians, Frank McKenna, former Canadian Ambassador to the U.S. and former premier of New Brunswick; Steven Pinker, Johnstone Family Professor of Psychology at Harvard University; Madeleine Redfern, Mayor of Iqaluit; Barry Blitt, Illustrator/Cartoonist at The New Yorker Magazine; Andrew Rowe, Director of the Institute for Integrated Energy Systems at University of Victoria; Ross Koningstein, who leads Climate and Energy Research at Google, and Dr. Mark Boyce, Professor of Ecology at University of Alberta.

The letter is also signed by noted environmentalist and climate change activist, James Hansen; Kerry A. Emanuel, Professor of Atmospheric Science at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Staffan Qvist and Joshua S. Goldstein, co-authors of *A Bright Future*; Ken Caldeira from the Carnegie Institution for Science, and Richard Rhodes, Pulitzer-Prize winning author of 26 books including his most recent, *Energy: A Human History*, published in May 2018.

A complete list of the signatories and the letter they signed is appended below. The letter is scheduled to be published in *The Hill Times* on Wednesday, November 7.

“We applaud Canadian companies and engineers for their research and development into a broad range of next-generation energy technologies including small modular reactors (SMRs) and the federal government for backing them,” added Mr. Schumacher. “These technologies are potential game-changers in the climate fight, and Canada’s leadership in this field is something every Canadian can be proud of.”

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For further information, or to arrange an interview with David Schumacher (who is currently in Ottawa), please contact: Brian Smith, tel. (416) 822-3130 / bsmith@the-lanes.ca

Climate Change and Nuclear Innovation: An Open Letter to Canadians

Accumulating evidence points to a looming climate-change catastrophe unless humanity takes dramatic action. A top priority is the large-scale deployment of low-carbon energy sources to rapidly replace polluting fuels.

Canada—a country standing on the right side of history with its commitment to cutting carbon emissions—has a special responsibility in this transformative moment. Promising efforts are underway to harness Canada’s considerable national capabilities— bolstered by a strong economy, educated population, and world-class research institutions— and help set an example to the world.

Canada’s power grid carbon emissions are two-thirds lower than the world average. Ontario’s emissions are even lower, largely because nuclear energy provides more than half the supply. The province has eliminated coal power entirely through a combination of nuclear energy, hydroelectric and renewables. Nationally, nuclear power is second only to hydroelectric power—a source not so easily expanded—in Canada’s clean energy supply.

We can make further progress in Canada (and globally) with Small Modular Reactors (SMRs): innovative, advanced nuclear power systems currently being developed by several Canadian companies, along with dozens more around the world. They offer safe, abundant, carbon-free energy to power Canada’s needs in the coming decades. And they offer the hope of providing clean and affordable power to Canada’s isolated, vulnerable communities that currently depend on dirty and expensive diesel fuel.

These innovative nuclear power efforts deserve the support of government, industry and all Canadians. Innovation in reactor designs will let us build on past successes and transition to a low-carbon economy. As many studies have shown, while renewable energy may eventually be able to provide a large share of the world’s low-carbon power, it would be risky to rely on renewable energy alone. SMRs will provide an additional powerful tool.

We applaud Canadian companies and engineers for their research and development into a broad range of next-generation energy technologies, including SMRs. These technologies are potential game-changers in the climate challenge, and Canada’s leadership in this field is something every Canadian can be proud of.

Signed,

Barry Blitt
Illustrator/Cartoonist
New Yorker Magazine

Dr. Douglas Boreham
Professor and Division Head of
Medical Sciences
Northern Ontario School of
Medicine

Mark S. Boyce
Professor of Ecology
University of Alberta

Professor Corey J. A. Bradshaw
Matthew Flinders Fellow
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Executive Director
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Kirsty Gogan
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Mark Lynas
Author, journalist and
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Rick Maltese
Founder of Energy Reality Project

Frank McKenna
Deputy Chairman, Toronto-
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Former Premier of NB
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