

Jane Fraser, Chief Executive Officer, CitiGroup
388 Greenwich Street New York, NY 10013

August 5, 2024

Ms. Fraser,

The 104 undersigned organizations and 135 individuals write to you to condemn CitiGroup and the New York City Police Department's (NYPD) recent tactics to repress the [Summer of Heat on Wall Street's campaign](#) of nonviolent civil disobedience. We stand in steadfast solidarity with Summer of Heat activists' right to peacefully advocate for a livable future and an end to the climate crisis, and the right of all activists to protest against injustice. We urge Citi and NYPD to respect protestors' constitutional rights to peaceful assembly and free speech, and cease their repressive tactics.

Since June 10, activists have blockaded the doors to Citi's global headquarters *thirteen times*, as part of an ongoing campaign of nonviolent civil disobedience to demand the urgent and transformative change needed to address the scale of the climate emergency. At least 2,500 people have participated in actions, and 450 people have been arrested at Citi's headquarters to date. The campaign has been covered by the [New York Times](#) and [Bloomberg](#).

In response, Citi appears to have begun targeting leaders and organizers with repressive tactics:

Instance of Citi Targeting Climate Leaders #1: On Thursday, July 18, two protestors were targeted with aggressive judicial tactics to deter their peaceful advocacy. Alec Connon and John Mark Rozendaal were locked together with a piece of PVC piping as part of a blockade of Citi's headquarters when a man ducked underneath the PVC piping, falsely accused Connon and Rozendaal of hitting him with it, and then filed a "temporary restraining order" against them. The temporary restraining order will be in place until a court date of September 6. The man who made the false accusation is believed to be a senior member of Citi's private security team, "Security and Intelligence Services."

If Connon or Rozendaal go to Citi's headquarters before September 6, they will be arrested, charged with criminal contempt, and could face a maximum sentence of seven years imprisonment.

Alec Connon is a leader of the Summer of Heat campaign and the coalition director of Stop the Money Pipeline, a network of 230+ organizations working to hold the financial sector accountable for its role in fueling climate chaos and environmental racism. John Mark Rozendaal is a 63-year-old professional cello player, retired Princeton adjunct instructor, and lifelong pacifist. Both are leaders of the climate justice movement and absolutely committed to nonviolence. Neither one of these esteemed community leaders pose a threat that justifies such

disproportionate retaliation for exercising their constitutionally protected rights to freedom of speech and peaceful assembly.

Instances of Citi Targeting Climate Leaders #2 & 3: Also on July 18, another senior member of Citi's "Security and Intelligence Services" had Jonathan Westin, the executive director of the Climate Organizing Hub arrested, falsely claiming that he had violently removed barricades at Citi's HQ. The prosecutor dismissed all charges as soon as they saw a video of Jonathan calmly and smoothly moving the barricades aside, but not before Citi tried to pin false charges on him and he spent 15 hours in jail.

On Saturday, July 27, Westin was sidewalk marshaling to keep protestors safe during another action when he was arrested without warning or cause.

Instance of Citi Targeting Climate Leaders #4: On Monday, July 22, Citi security services also had Teddy Ogborn, a founding member of Planet Over Profit, arrested on another set of fabricated, escalated charges. Teddy was filming an action, and despite complying with police warnings to leave, was arrested without being given a reason. He was then held in police custody for 8.5 hours, twice as long as typical, and in a different precinct from other activists arrested that day.

The fact that Citi's private security team had visible, prominent leaders of three of the four convening organizations of the Summer of Heat arrested on trumped up charges makes it clear that this was a cynical and deliberate attempt by Citi to target key Summer of Heat leaders and avoid accountability for their direct role in the destruction of our planet and the devastation to frontline communities.

The Center for International Environmental Law (CIEL)'s stated in response: "The use of vague restraining orders to keep protesters away from Citi's New York headquarters represents a troubling effort to suppress these lawful demonstrations and mute advocacy for a just and sustainable world. Such measures not only threaten democratic freedoms and hinder crucial advocacy against environmental racism, but most importantly undermine efforts to challenge the financial underpinnings of the climate crisis. We urge respect for the constitutional right to peaceful assembly and free speech, and support the rights of activists advocating for accountability and the transformative change necessary to address the climate emergency."

We need ambitious, transformative action to equitably transition away from fossil fuels to sustainable energy sources at the pace and scale demanded by the climate emergency. Monday, July 22 was the [hottest day ever](#) registered (immediately breaking the new record set the day before), amid a scorching summer of record-breaking heatwaves and horrific wildfires across Turtle Island. Without drastic change, including an [end to expanded fossil fuel production](#), the world will blow past its goals for limiting global warming.

Throughout history, nonviolent direct action has been successfully employed by social movements to resist injustice, from the civil rights movement of the 1950's and 60's to ACT-UP's

fight to save millions of lives during the HIV/AIDS pandemic of the 1980's. The Summer of Heat on Wall Street's sustained campaign of nonviolent civil disobedience against the fossil fuel industry's Wall Street funders is joining this legacy. In just 6 weeks, the campaign has developed a base of highly engaged activists, many of whom are brand new to the climate movement, and shone a brighter light on banks' role in the climate crisis.

It is police and private security that enact violence—not the peaceful activists they target—when they respond to protests with escalated force. [Disproportionate police force makes lawful and constitutionally protected nonviolent protest unsafe](#) for activists, and in particular it puts People of Color at grave risk for both physical and emotional harm. Citi's collaboration with NYPD to target Summer of Heat leaders, ignore and even enable assaults against protestors, reveals the extent to which Citi prioritizes fossil fuel profits over the wellbeing of people.

Citi and NYPD's tactics are blatant efforts to repress our movement. **Instead of attempting to silence climate defenders, Citi should meet our [demands](#) to:**

- 1. Stop funding fossil fuels;**
- 2. Exponentially increase financing for renewable energy;**
- 3. Respect human rights and Indigenous sovereignty as part of a just transition; and**
- 4. Repair the harm caused by its fossil fuel financing.**

Additionally, Citi must immediately cease its repressive targeting of Summer of Heat leaders and activists.

We will absolutely not back down in the face of repression. Our campaign will continue unless Citi decides to meaningfully address its fossil fuel financing rather than attack climate defenders.

In Solidarity with our Colleagues,

Organizations

Stand.earth

Accelerate Neighborhood Climate Action

ActionAid USA

Alabama Interfaith Power & Light

Amazon Watch

Association for Farmers Rights Defense

BankTrack

Bronx Climate Justice North

Businesses for a Livable Climate

Campus Climate Network

CatholicNetwork US

Center for International Environmental Law

Centre for Citizens Conserving Environment
& Management

Central Unitarian Church Social Action
Team

Chilli

CleanEarth4Kids.org

Climate Families

Climate Organizing Hub

Colorado Businesses for a Livable Climate

Community for Sustainable Energy

Connecticut Citizen Action Group

Dominican Development Center, Inc.

Extinction Rebellion of the Capital Region

Extinction Rebellion San Francisco Bay
Area

First Do No Harm

Friends of the Earth

Gidimt'en Checkpoint

Giniw Collective

Greater New Orleans Housing Alliance

GreenFaith
Gulf South Fossil Finance Hub
Indigenous Environmental Network
Indivisible Ambassadors
Innovation pour le Développement et la
Protection de l'Environnement
Interstate 70 Citizens Advisory Group
Labor Rise Climate Jobs Action Group
Larimer Alliance for Health, Safety &
Environment
LittleSis / Public Accountability Initiative
Littleton Business Alliance
Malcolm X Center for Self Determination
Mayfair Park Neighborhood Association
Mazaska Talks
Mental Health & Inclusion Ministries
Mind's Eye Productions
Montbello Neighborhood Improvement
Association
Movimiento Ríos Vivos / MARBE SA
MPower Change
New Mexico Climate Justice
New York Communities for Change
Nordic Center for Sustainable Finance -
ActionAid Denmark
North Bronx Racial Justice
North Range Concerned Citizens
Occupy Bergen County
Oil and Gas Action Network
Our Sacred Earth
People's Action Institute
Presente.org
Private Equity Stakeholder Project
Radical Elders
Rainforest Action Network
Reclaim Finance
Rise Economy
Rivers & Mountains GreenFaith Circle
Save Ohio Parks
Save the Environmental Protection Agency

Individuals

Bill McKibben
Adam McKay

Small Business Alliance
Social Eco Education
SolidarityINFOService
Southwest Organization for Sustainability
Spirit of the Sun
Stop the Money Pipeline
Sunflower Alliance
System Change Not Climate Change
Texas Campaign for the Environment
The People's Justice Council
The YEARS Project
Third Act
Third Act Maryland
Third Act NYC
Third Act Ohio
Third Act Sacramento
Third Act Southern California
Third Act Upstate New York
Third Act Virginia
Turtle Island Restoration Network
Unite North Metro Denver
Urgewald
Vessel Project of Louisiana
Wall of Women
We Are Together
Western Slope Businesses for a Livable
Climate
Womxn from the Mountain
Working for Racial Equity
Youth Climate Finance Alliance (YCFA)
198 methods
350 Brooklyn
350 Colorado
350Hawaii
350Juneau
350NYC
350 Seattle
350Wenatchee
350 Yakima Climate Action
1000 Grandmothers for Future Generations

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Adriana Voss-Andreae, MD PhD

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Amanda Lauricella
Amy Gray
Amy Sherwood
Ana Juarbe
Angel Roman
Angela
Ann Bartz
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Barbara Chasin
Bennett Seidman
Bethany Ojalehto Mays
Bill Ragen
Bobby Greenberg
Bruce Hungate
Cathy Cowan Becker
Cecilia Ford
Chris Packham
Christina Alaniz
Clara Vondrich
Clayton Dewey
Coleen Anderson
Dr. Croliss Parker
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Patrick Santana
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Sally Richman
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Stephanie Robinson
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