



OFFICE OF THE  
**STATE TREASURER**



OFFICE OF THE  
**STATE AUDITOR**

## **News Release**

**For Immediate Release  
December 1, 2021**

### **State Treasurer Marlo M. Oaks and State Auditor John Dougall join fellow state financial officers in push back against bank boycotts of traditional energy industries**

*State Treasurer to perform an enhanced due diligence assessment of financial services contracts with institutions that have publicly pledged to boycott fossil fuel industries*

**Salt Lake City, UTAH** – State Treasurer Marlo M. Oaks and State Auditor John Dougall joined state financial officers representing 15 states in an effort to stand up against the ongoing and growing economic boycott of traditional energy production industries by U.S. financial institutions.

A coalition of 16 State Treasurers, Auditors and Comptrollers has sent an open letter to banking industry officials notifying them that each state will take deliberate steps toward selecting financial institutions that have not adopted corporate policies to cut off financing for the coal, oil and natural gas industries. In Utah, the State Treasurer will perform an enhanced due diligence assessment of future financial services contracts with institutions that have publicly pledged to boycott traditional energy industries.

“Traditional energy plays an important role in Utah’s economy, particularly in rural Utah. Cutting off financing for businesses engaged in economically essential activities to advance a radical social agenda destroys livelihoods, increases costs and does little to advance the desire we all have to breathe cleaner air and improve the environment. Punishing these entities is antithetical to our nation’s capitalist system that has developed some of the greatest innovations in human history,” Treasurer Oaks said.

Auditor Dougall said "Utah is an all-of-the-above energy state. Utahns expect reliable, low-cost energy with a continual push for cleaner air. Government should not be picking market winners and losers. Banks and investors should focus on the potential of companies to provide increased shareholder value, rather than favoring certain partisan agendas, particularly at the expense of shareholders. Energy companies of all types should have unfettered access to capital and lending markets."

The letter makes clear that officials are not asking for special treatment for these industries, just that they be treated like any other legal business operating in the free market, without prejudice or preference.

“As clean energy technologies improve, the energy sector will naturally shift to cleaner energy sources. Preventing businesses engaged in economically essential activities from accessing capital is unnecessary and could even hinder clean energy development,” Treasurer Oaks said.

Earlier this year, media reports and a Congressional letter accused Special Presidential Envoy for Climate John Kerry of privately pressuring banks to cut off lending to traditional energy industries and instead divert that capital to alternative energy firms. Since that time, the Biden administration has issued guidance to the international multilateral development banks that intend to cut off capital investment in traditional energy projects around the world. In addition, the President has also nominated a candidate for Comptroller

for the Currency – the position tasked with chartering and regulating U.S. banks – who has openly stated she would like to bankrupt coal, oil and natural gas companies.

The letter can be found on the State Treasurer’s website at:

<https://treasurer.utah.gov/wp-content/uploads/Traditional-Energy-Banking-Letter.pdf>.

### **About the Office of the State Treasurer**

The Office of the State Treasurer performs a broad array of functions that are critical to the banking, investment management and financing operations of state agencies and local governments throughout Utah. The office orchestrates the state’s cash collection, concentration, disbursement and investment processes and carefully manages banking, brokerage and custodial relationships to ensure that banking operations are conducted in an efficient, secure and cost-effective manner. The office administers and manages the \$25 billion Public Treasurers’ Investment Fund, which provides daily liquidity to state agencies and more than 700 local governmental entities throughout Utah. The office also manages several longer-term investment portfolios, and a portfolio of statutorily required government escrow accounts. Office staff assists the State Treasurer with the issuance of the state’s general obligation and lease revenue bonds.

The State Treasurer is a Constitutional Officer of the State of Utah, elected by the state’s citizens every four years. The role of the State Treasurer is authorized in Article VII, Section 15 of the Utah Constitution. For more information, see [treasurer.utah.gov](http://treasurer.utah.gov).

### **About the Office of the State Auditor**

The Office of the State Auditor provides Utah taxpayers and government officials with an independent assessment of financial operation, statutory compliance, and performance management for state and local government.

Specific activities of the Office include performing financial audits, conducting federal funds compliance audits, providing local government oversight, conducting agency and program performance audits, performing fraud and compliance audits, and operating the State Auditor Hotline for citizens to report suspected financial issues or improprieties. These capabilities strengthen Utah State Government and help taxpayers have confidence in the integrity of Utah’s government agencies.

The Office also provides interactive graphical tools to help taxpayers and policymakers gain greater insight into governmental financial activities.

The State Auditor is a Constitutional Officer of the State of Utah, elected by the state’s citizens every four years. The role of the Utah State Auditor is authorized in Article VII, Section 15 of the Utah Constitution. For more information, see [auditor.utah.gov](http://auditor.utah.gov).

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