

Statement to the Marin County Employees Retirement Association on August 13, 2014

My name is Paul Burks. I have lived in Marin County since 1971 just across the highway and am a retired United Methodist Minister. I have previously worked with the General Electric Company in sales engineering and the American Friends Service Committee, winner of the Nobel Peace Prize, in New York City and San Francisco. I have been president of the Ecumenical Association for Housing in Marin County. I am currently serving on the Steering Committee of 350Marin, an arm of the worldwide 350.org, launched by Bill McKibben, a nationally published writer.

In retirement since 1995 I have chosen to invest my modest portfolio in socially responsible investments which have proved to produce good financial returns and to be solid, sound investments. This has become the most rapidly growing area of investments in the US and overseas. A close associate of mine during my years living in Marin has been John Harrington, owner of Harrington Investments, Inc. and previously an investment consultant to the State Agency overseeing CalPERS in Sacramento. He was also a member of the Sacramento City Pension Board. His investment firm specializes in Fossil Fuel Free investing. A statement on his website, www.harringtoninvestments.com, is entitled "Going Carbon Free: The Investment Case for Divesting from Fossil Fuels." I commend this statement and its investment rationale to MCERA and strongly affirm its approach out of my own experience with my retirement portfolio. I also commend the Fossil Fuel Free funds of John Dodson's Parnassus Endeavor Fund and the Green Century Equity and Balance Funds.

I am proud to have been a part of the successful South

Africa divestment campaign of the National Council of Churches, the divestment campaign from corporations hired by Israel in building settlements in Palestine (most recently the Presbyterian Church USA from Caterpillar and Motorola), and the Climate Change movement divestment campaign from Fossil Fuel investments, most frequently taking place in colleges and universities across the United States.

Best wishes in your work on behalf of retired employees of Marin County,