



DATE: April 15, 2019

RE: Statement of Support for Extinction Rebellion's Non-Violent Direct Action on Climate Change

FROM: Steering Committee, Greater Boston Physicians for Social Responsibility

The climate crisis is already in plain sight and poses an existential threat to our futures. Immediate and dramatic reductions in fossil fuel use are imperative if we are to avoid its most devastating consequences. As physicians, we consider it our responsibility to help people understand the enormous harms of our current energy infrastructure and modes of consumption. Our resulting carbon waste increases heat related illnesses including heat stroke and hyperthermia; respiratory, heart, allergic, and insect-borne diseases; injuries and mental illness caused or worsened by extreme weather events, death from flooding and drought; and malnutrition resulting from reductions in crop quality. The World Health Organization has projected ~250,000 excess deaths from the effects of climate change between 2030 and 2050. This is probably an underestimate, as it takes into account only a few of the expected health consequences.

These threats to our health and safety have accelerated under a federal administration that continues to expand fossil fuel extraction and to degrade environmental protections and emissions standards, and an economic system that prioritizes profits over the protection of our communities and our planet. Climate change is an emergency and poses a moral call to action. Assertive, sustained public pressure is required. That is why we wholeheartedly support the work of courageous groups like Extinction Rebellion and their allies.