

Press Release

October 6, 2019

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Extinction Rebellion Chicago (XR Chicago)
Background Information

Chicago, IL – Extinction Rebellion Chicago (XR Chicago) is a chapter of XR International, an international movement that uses non-violent civil disobedience in an attempt to halt mass extinction and minimize the looming risk of social collapse. XR currently has a presence in more than 72 countries with a total of 485 groups across 473 cities and towns. All of its chapters adhere to the same set of 10 principles, values and demands; all are invited to act under the XR name as long they adhere to them.

The overwhelming majority of scientists agree that – without swift and deep systemic change -- we face the very real possibility of irreversible climate change leading to mass extinction beginning within a matter of years. Yet despite the urgency, governments have refused to acknowledge the extent of the global climate crisis and to enact the bold legislation needed. XR is mobilizing world populations to conduct actions until governments meet its demands. Rather than advance a particular set of solutions, XR demands the formation of Citizens’ Assemblies that will have the authority to advise governments on changes.

“As a ‘movement of movements’, XR Chicago invites all people in Chicago and the Midwest region to join us in demanding action on the climate crisis,” said Joe Phillips, XR Chicago’s spokesperson. “City, state and national governments have known about the dangers of climate change for years and have done nothing. Our most vulnerable communities are already experiencing the effects of runaway climate change. There is no time to lose, and we won’t stop until our four demands are met.”

In every crisis is the possibility for transformation. XR Chicago’s mission is to mobilize our population to achieve system change and ensure the continuation of life on earth, while creating a regenerative culture – one that is healthy, resilient and adaptable. In order to achieve that, XR Chicago has joined people across the world to call for transformation from a fossil-fueled present that threatens all life on earth, to a vision of change that creates a world fit for generations to come.

Vision of XR International

XR's global vision is to live in a world where we build thriving connections within our society and environment. This will bring hope in the face of climate change effects already being experienced and enable us to decide the direction of our lives and futures. It is also an inclusive world, where we work consciously to ensure fair processes of collective decision-making, where creativity is prioritized, and where our diversity of gifts are recognized, celebrated and can flourish.

Mission of XR International

XR's mission is to spark and sustain a spirit of creative rebellion, which will enable much-needed changes in our political, economic and social landscape. We endeavor to mobilize and train organizers to assist communities in developing the tools they need to address deeply rooted problems. We work to transform our society into one that is compassionate, inclusive, sustainable, equitable and connected.

Demands of XR United States

In addition to XR International's three demands, XR chapters in the US have included a fourth demand, designed to prioritize our society's most vulnerable populations. The demands are:

1. That the Government must tell the truth about the climate and wider ecological emergency, it must reverse all policies not in alignment with that position and must work alongside the media to communicate the urgency for change, including what individuals, communities and businesses need to do.
2. The Government must enact legally binding policies to reduce carbon emissions to net zero by 2025 and take further action to remove the excess of atmospheric greenhouse gases. It must cooperate internationally so that the global economy runs on no more than half a planet's worth of resources per year.
3. We do not trust our Government to make the bold, swift and long-term changes necessary to achieve these changes and we do not intend to hand further power to our politicians. Instead we demand a Citizens' Assembly to oversee the changes as we rise from the wreckage, creating a democracy fit for purpose.
4. We demand a just transition that prioritizes the most vulnerable people and indigenous sovereignty; establishes reparations and remediation led by and for Black people, Indigenous people, people of color and poor communities for years of environmental injustice; establishes legal rights for ecosystems to thrive and regenerate in perpetuity; and repairs the effects of ongoing ecocide to prevent extinction of human and all species, in order to maintain a livable, just planet for all.

Principles and Values of XR International

XR Chicago abides by all of XR International's Principles and Values:

1. *We have a shared vision of change*, creating a world that is fit for generations to come.
2. *We set our mission on what is necessary*, mobilizing 3.5% of the population to achieve system change – using ideas such as *momentum-driven organizing* to achieve this.
3. *We need a regenerative culture*, creating a culture which is healthy, resilient and adaptable.
4. *We openly challenge ourselves and this toxic system*, leaving our comfort zones to take action for change.
5. *We value reflecting and learning*, following a cycle of action, reflection, learning, and planning for more action, learning from other movements and contexts as well as our own experiences.
6. *We welcome everyone and every part of everyone*, working actively to create safer and more accessible spaces.
7. *We actively mitigate for power*, breaking down hierarchies of power for more equitable participation.
8. *We avoid blaming and shaming*. We live in a toxic system, but no one individual is to blame.
9. *We are a non-violent network*, using non-violent strategy and tactics as the most effective way to bring about change.
10. *We are based on autonomy and decentralization*. We collectively create the structures we need to challenge power. Anyone who follows these core principles and values can take action in the name of Extinction Rebellion.

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