

Environment & Energy

California Pension Divestment Bill Blocked in Senate (Correct)

By Zach Bright

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A bill that would divest California's pension systems from fossil fuels is effectively dead after a state Assembly committee chairman said he doesn't plan to hold a hearing to advance it, divestment advocates said Tuesday.

The bill, S.B. 1173, would restrict the public employee and teachers pensions—CalPERS and CalSTRS—from investing more than \$11 billion in funds in fossil fuels by 2030. But state Assemblyman Jim Cooper (D), who chairs the Committee on Public Employment and Retirement, opposes such a measure and has declined to hold a hearing this legislative session.

"Teachers and state employees whose retirement futures are invested by our state's pension funds have long demanded that CalPERS and CalSTRS cease investing their money in fossil fuel companies," state Sen. Lena Gonzalez (D), the bill sponsor, said, "and this demand will only grow stronger and louder."

1. "It is upsetting to see such significant legislation for climate accountability and the divestment of our state pensions from fossil fuels come to a halt," said Miriam Eide, coordinating director for Fossil Free California.
2. In a March legislative hearing, CalPERS CEO Marcie Frost said divestment efforts could cost the pension fund \$8 billion. Divestment advocates like Fossil Free California say divesting has economic benefits, saying fossil fuels are in decline.
3. The bill was advanced by the state Senate in May with a 21-10 vote.

(Corrects the state Senate vote tally in a story published June 21.)

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