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November 9, 2020

Doug McMillon
Chairman of the Board of Directors
Business Roundtable
702 SW 8th Street
Bentonville, AR 72716

Mark Sutton
Chairman, Energy & Environment Committee
Business Roundtable
6400 Poplar Avenue
Memphis, TN 38197

Dear Mr. McMillon and Mr. Sutton,

I write in regards to the Business Roundtable's (BRT) September 2020 release of "new principles and policies to address climate change."¹ In this release, BRT members called "on businesses and governments around the world to work together to limit global temperature rise this century to well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, consistent with the goals of the Paris Agreement,"² noting that "domestic and international efforts are falling far short of what will be required to avoid the worst effects of climate change."³

This is an important step forward. But while I am glad that the BRT is acknowledging the need for federal action to address the climate crisis, I am concerned that, given the history of previous BRT commitments, including the 2019 *Statement on the Purpose of a Corporation*,⁴ which "have fallen short of the promise"⁵ and appeared to be only thinly veiled publicity stunts,⁶ your new commitments may not translate into action. To address my concerns, I ask that you

¹ Business Roundtable, "Business Roundtable: Market-Based Solutions Best Approach to Combat Climate Change," press release, September 16, 2020, <https://www.businessroundtable.org/business-roundtable-market-based-solutions-best-approach-to-combat-climate-change>.

² *Id.*

³ Business Roundtable, "Addressing Climate Change: Principles and Policies," report, September 16, 2020, <https://s3.amazonaws.com/brt.org/Business-RoundtableAddressingClimateChangeReport.September2020.pdf>.

⁴ Business Roundtable, "Business Roundtable Redefines the Purpose of a Corporation to Promote 'An Economy That Serves All Americans,'" press release, August 19, 2019, <https://www.businessroundtable.org/business-roundtable-redefines-the-purpose-of-a-corporation-to-promote-an-economy-that-serves-all-americans>.

⁵ New York Times, "Stakeholder Capitalism Gets a Report Card. It's Not Good.," Peter Goodman, September 24, 2020, <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/22/business/business-roundtable-stakeholder-capitalism.html>.

⁶ Office of Senator Warren, "Senator Warren to Business Roundtable: Your 2019 Commitment to 'Promote an Economy that Serves all Americans' Was an Empty Publicity Stunt," press release, September 17, 2020, <https://www.warren.senate.gov/newsroom/press-releases/senator-warren-to-business-roundtable-your-2019-commitment-to-promote-an-economy-that-serves-all-americans-was-an-empty-publicity-stunt>.

provide detailed information about the climate-related actions and metrics you will require BRT members to take and meet, the specific policies you will support and oppose, and the steps that your organization will take to publicly report companies' progress.

The BRT report on its new principles endorsed various measures to address the climate crisis, including “disclos[ing] material risks that may be driven by climate change,” “[p]lacing a price on carbon,” adopting a “comprehensive federal climate strategy,” and other measures.⁷ Specifically, the BRT endorsed federal policies to “at least doubl[e] federal funding from current levels for advanced energy innovation and [support] doubling total climate-related research funding,” “improv[e] the efficiency of energy production, distribution and use,” reinforce infrastructure “to withstand increasingly severe weather and rising sea levels,” and invest “in new infrastructure not only to produce and more efficiently use energy but also to transport [energy] to where it will be needed or stored.”⁸

I am glad that your member corporations have at least changed their rhetoric to shift “from a source of resistance to a force for action on climate.”⁹ But it is important to note that other large trade associations representing some of the nation’s largest corporations, including the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, “the world’s largest business organization,”¹⁰ continue to lobby against climate action.¹¹ Since reports show that while “companies are stepping up in record numbers to set emissions-reduction targets for their internal operations,” “corporate actions have not always translated to responsible policy advocacy,”¹² the BRT must take steps to align its public statements with its political activity and to publicly document the steps they are taking to reduce their emissions and support emissions-reducing public policy. If the BRT is serious about its commitments, it would make these concrete steps a requirement for BRT membership.

Economic Threats of the Climate Crisis

The seriousness of the climate crisis deserves more than empty rhetoric without any actual climate action. A comprehensive international review released earlier this year found that “[t]he current pace of human-caused carbon emissions is increasingly likely to trigger irreversible damage to the planet” and that “[t]here is basically little or no chance that we are going to get lucky and find that the warming caused by our activities turns out to be minor.”¹³ These findings add to concerns raised by other studies that have estimated that “the current value

⁷ Business Roundtable, “Addressing Climate Change: Principles and Policies,” report, September 16, 2020, <https://s3.amazonaws.com/brt.org/Business-RoundtableAddressingClimateChangeReport.September2020.pdf>.

⁸ *Id.*

⁹ Wall Street Journal, “Business Shifts From Resistance to Action on Climate,” Greg Ip, September 16, 2020, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/business-shifts-from-resistance-to-action-on-climate-11600233503>.

¹⁰ U.S. Chamber of Commerce, “About the U.S. Chamber of Commerce,” Accessed September 28, 2020, <https://www.uschamber.com/about/about-the-us-chamber-of-commerce>.

¹¹ Bloomberg, “U.S. Chamber to Re-Examine Climate Policy That Cost It Members,” Jennifer Dlouhy, September 24, 2019, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2019-09-24/u-s-chamber-to-re-examine-climate-policy-that-cost-it-members>.

¹² World Resources Institute, “How the Chamber of Commerce’s Scorecard Elevates Climate Deniers,” Amy Meyer, Jillian Neuberger, and Menghun Kaing, August 24, 2020, <https://www.wri.org/blog/2020/08/how-chamber-commerces-scorecard-elevates-climate-deniers>.

¹³ Washington Post, “Major new climate study rules out less severe global warming scenarios,” Andrew Freedman and Chris Mooney, July 22, 2020, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/weather/2020/07/22/climate-sensitivity-co2/>.

of direct private investor losses globally due to the physical risks of climate change is between \$4.2 trillion and \$13.8 trillion, depending on the warming scenario” and that climate change may lead to “global economic losses [that] could mount to \$23 trillion per year—permanent damage that would far eclipse the scale of the 2007-2008 financial crisis.”¹⁴

Increasingly rising global temperature and its effects will “universally hurt worker health and productivity,”¹⁵ will “increasingly disrupt and damage critical infrastructure and property,”¹⁶ and pose threats to national security and the ability of the Department of Defense to carry out its mission.¹⁷ The devastation caused by the climate crisis will also be disproportionately felt by communities of color, low-income communities, and other frontline communities that have already withstood the worst environmental injustices.¹⁸

The Trump administration, as you are well aware, has not only failed to respond to the urgent threat of climate change but also has actively worked to exacerbate the crisis. The Trump administration has reportedly worked to embed climate denial in scientific research.¹⁹ Throughout the Trump administration’s tenure, the administration has worked to eliminate or weaken nearly 100 environmental safeguards, including those on “planet-warming carbon dioxide emissions from power plants and from cars and trucks... and rolled back many more rules governing clean air, water, wildlife, and toxic chemicals.”²⁰ Given the dire economic consequences caused by climate change and an administration that makes these problems worse, corporations should listen to customers, investors, workers, and other stakeholders and act swiftly to protect our economy from these worsening effects by giving the public the tools necessary to assess the impacts and risks on individual companies and the broader economy.

Operationalizing the Business Roundtable’s Climate Commitments

In your new statement, the BRT indicated support for “a complementary portfolio of policies” through which “the implementation of a well-designed market-based mechanism that would drive innovation and reduce the administrative complexity and uncertainty associated with

¹⁴ Center for American Progress, “Climate Change Threatens the Stability of the Financial System,” Gregg Gelzinis and Graham Steele, November 21, 2019, <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/economy/reports/2019/11/21/477190/climate-change-threatens-stability-financial-system/>.

¹⁵ Moody’s Analytics, “The Economic Implications of Climate Change,” Chris Lafakis, Laura Ratz, Emily Fazio, and Maria Cosma, June 2019, <https://www.moodyanalytics.com/-/media/article/2019/economic-implications-of-climate-change.pdf>.

¹⁶ *Id.*

¹⁷ Government Accountability Office, “CLIMATE RESILIENCE: Actions Needed to Ensure DOD Considers Climate Risks to Contractors as Part of Acquisition, Supply, and Risk Assessment,” June 2020, <https://www.warren.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/climate%20change%20contractors%20report.pdf>.

¹⁸ Brookings Institution, “Ten facts about the economics of climate change and climate policy,” Ryan Nunn, Jimmy O’Donnell, Jay Shambaugh, Lawrence Goulder, Charles Kolstad, and Xianling Long, October 23, 2019, <https://www.brookings.edu/research/ten-facts-about-the-economics-of-climate-change-and-climate-policy/>.

¹⁹ New York Times, “A Trump Insider Embeds Climate Denial in Scientific Research,” Hiroko Tabuchi, March 2, 2020, <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/02/climate/goks-uncertainty-language-interior.html>.

²⁰ New York Times, “The Trump Administration Is Reversing Nearly 100 Environmental Rules. Here’s the Full List.,” Nadja Popovich, Livia Albeck-Ripka, and Kendra Pierre-Louis, October 15, 2020, <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/climate/trump-environment-rollbacks.html>.

a regulatory approach to limiting emissions.”²¹ But your recent report lacks specific details for carbon pricing strategies that your organization will support or oppose. The report repeatedly supports “market-based” approaches but does “not endorse” specific proposals and does not explain what is meant by this term.²² This is worrying because some existing proposals suggest tying carbon pricing with provisions to “strip the Environmental Protection Agency of most powers to issue new regulations to control emissions, including a full repeal of the Clean Power Plan that the Obama administration wrote to govern power plants.”²³ Such proposals would ultimately weaken “the entire authority of the Environmental Protection Agency to limit [carbon dioxide emissions] under the Clean Air Act,”²⁴ and your report, which argues that carbon pricing should be tied to “minimizing administrative burdens,” such as “[e]xisting federal and state climate regulations and policies,”²⁵ suggests that the BRT and its members may support these efforts.

Similarly, another area where your report references support for substantive climate policy without actually engaging in the details of what you would or would not support is the issue of climate risk to our economy. I have long supported legislative and regulatory action to address the economic threats posed by the climate crisis,²⁶ and I introduced the *Climate Risk Disclosure Act*, whose House companion passed the House Financial Services Committee last year,²⁷ to require public companies to disclose critical information about their exposure to climate risk.²⁸ Investors and fund managers are clearly moving in the same direction. In August 2020, a group of institutional investors and fund managers, businesses, and former regulators and lawmakers sent financial regulators a letter about the “systemic threat to financial markets and the real economy, with significant disruptive consequences on asset valuations and our nation’s economic stability” posed by the climate crisis.²⁹ The letter called on federal and state regulators to “implement a broader range of actions to explicitly integrate climate change across [their]

²¹ Business Roundtable, “Business Roundtable: Market-Based Solutions Best Approach to Combat Climate Change,” press release, September 16, 2020, <https://www.businessroundtable.org/business-roundtable-market-based-solutions-best-approach-to-combat-climate-change>.

²² Business Roundtable, “Addressing Climate Change: Principles and Policies,” report, September 16, 2020, <https://s3.amazonaws.com/brt.org/Business-RoundtableAddressingClimateChangeReport.September2020.pdf>.

²³ Inside Climate News, “Republican Carbon Tax Proposal: Novel Climate Solution or Regulatory Giveaway?,” John Cushman, February 9, 2017, <https://insideclimatenews.org/news/08022017/carbon-tax-epa-clean-power-plan-climate-change-donald-trump>.

²⁴ *Id.*

²⁵ Business Roundtable, “Addressing Climate Change: Principles and Policies,” report, September 16, 2020, <https://s3.amazonaws.com/brt.org/Business-RoundtableAddressingClimateChangeReport.September2020.pdf>.

²⁶ Office of Senator Warren, “Senator Warren Releases Statement on CFTC Report Concluding that “Climate Change Poses a Major Risk to the Stability of the Financial System,” press release, September 10, 2020, <https://www.warren.senate.gov/newsroom/press-releases/senator-warren-releases-statement-on-cftc-report-concluding-that-climate-change-poses-a-major-risk-to-the-stability-of-the-financial-system>.

²⁷ Office of Representative Casten, “Casten, Warren ‘Climate Risk Disclosure’ Act Passes House Financial Services Committee,” press release, July 17, 2019, <https://casten.house.gov/media/press-releases/casten-warren-climate-risk-disclosure-act-passes-house-financial-services>.

²⁸ Climate Risk Disclosure Act of 2019, S. 2075, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/senate-bill/2075>.

²⁹ Ceres, “40 investors with nearly \$1 trillion to join other leaders to urge U.S. financial regulators to act on climate,” press release, July 21, 2020, <https://www.ceres.org/news-center/press-releases/40-investors-nearly-1-trillion-join-other-leaders-urge-us-financial>.

mandates” and stated, “[s]uch actions are needed to protect the economy from any further disruptive shocks.”³⁰

Your report referenced this growing support for climate risk disclosure when stating that “[m]any companies seek to be transparent around their approaches and progress” on improving efficiency and reducing greenhouse gas emissions and that “[i]t is important for companies to continue to engage on, and disclose when appropriate, material risks that may be driven by climate change as well as the business opportunities associated with advancing low-carbon solutions.”³¹ But then your report immediately pivots away from supporting climate risk disclosure that would allow investors and the public to better understand the risks of climate change on their investments and undercuts your argument by stating “[t]hese disclosures should be voluntary and industry supported.”³² I introduced my bill, and investors and regulators are calling for stronger disclosure standards because the “lack of common definitions and standards for climate-related data... is hindering the ability of market participants and regulators to monitor and manage climate risk” and lead to “a barrier to effective climate risk management.”³³ It appears that, yet again, your organization is trying to associate itself with strong policies and principles while indicating that it will ultimately not support them.

Business Roundtable’s Ongoing Opposition to Environmental Safeguards

I am also concerned that the BRT’s history of opposition to strong climate and environmental standards will undermine its new commitments. The new BRT statement recognizing that the climate crisis “poses significant environmental, economic, public health and security threats to countries around the world, including the United States” and that its risks “will only increase as the Earth’s system warms more quickly” and asserting that “corporations should lead by example” is important – but the statement’s existing policy positions appear to be in direct opposition to this rhetoric.³⁴ In 2013, the BRT joined the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the National Association of Manufacturers, two lobbying organizations that have “helped completely block climate policy at the federal level,”³⁵ in leading a letter and issuing paid advertising³⁶ urging then-President Obama to approve the Keystone XL tar sands pipeline, which

³⁰ Letter from Ceres and other nonprofits, investors, businesses, and individuals to Securities and Exchange Commission Chairman Clayton, July 21, 2020, <https://www.ceres.org/sites/default/files/Federal%20Regulators%20Letter.pdf>.

³¹ Business Roundtable, “Addressing Climate Change: Principles and Policies,” report, September 16, 2020, <https://s3.amazonaws.com/brt.org/Business-RoundtableAddressingClimateChangeReport.September2020.pdf>.

³² *Id.*

³³ Commodity Futures Trading Commission, “Managing Climate Risk in the U.S. Financial System: Report of the Climate-Related Market Risk Subcommittee, Market Risk Advisory Committee of the U.S. Commodity Futures Trading Commission,” report, September 9, 2020, <https://www.cftc.gov/sites/default/files/2020-09/9-9-20%20Report%20of%20the%20Subcommittee%20on%20Climate-Related%20Market%20Risk%20-%20Managing%20Climate%20Risk%20in%20the%20U.S.%20Financial%20System%20for%20posting.pdf>.

³⁴ Business Roundtable, “Addressing Climate Change: Principles and Policies,” report, September 16, 2020, <https://s3.amazonaws.com/brt.org/Business-RoundtableAddressingClimateChangeReport.September2020.pdf>.

³⁵ Vox, “These senators are going after the biggest climate villains in Washington,” David Roberts, November 18, 2019, <https://www.vox.com/energy-and-environment/2019/6/7/18654957/climate-change-lobbying-chamber-of-commerce>.

³⁶ Business Roundtable, “Keystone XL: For Investment, Competitiveness,” Carter Wood, October 10, 2013, <https://www.businessroundtable.org/archive/media/blog/keystone-xl-for-investment-competitiveness>.

would “increase climate emissions by 24.3 million metric tons [of carbon dioxide] per year,” or the equivalent of “Americans driving more than 60 billion additional miles per year.”³⁷ The BRT also submitted various comment letters urging the Obama administration against implementing proposals to strengthen air quality standards.³⁸

During the Trump administration, the BRT has supported various rollbacks of environmental safeguards. Notably, last year, the BRT applauded Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Andrew Wheeler for changing how the agency calculates the impact of air pollution on public health in a way “that would make it easier to roll back a key climate change rule.”³⁹ This BRT-supported rollback of the *Clean Air Act*, “the landmark law used to regulate everything from greenhouse gases to ozone to hazardous air pollutants,” “could stymie efforts by future administrations to combat climate change.”⁴⁰ Furthermore, earlier this year, the BRT submitted a public comment letter “commend[ing]”⁴¹ the Council on Environmental Quality for proposing regulations to weaken the implementation of the *National Environmental Policy Act* (NEPA), often cited as “the Magna Carta of environmental laws.”⁴² NEPA “requires the federal government to analyze the impact of a major project or federal action on the environment — and to seek public input — before approving it,” and the law “provides Americans — particularly those in poor and minority neighborhoods that bear the brunt of many polluting industries — with a say on proposals that will affect them for decades to come.”⁴³ During the NEPA rulemaking, the BRT used its influence to support “one of the biggest — and most audacious — deregulatory actions of the Trump administration, which to date has moved to roll back 100 rules protecting clean air and water, and others that aim to reduce the threat of human-caused climate change.”⁴⁴

³⁷ Business Roundtable, “165 Business Leaders Support Keystone XL in Letter to President Obama,” press release, October 9, 2013, https://s3.amazonaws.com/brt.org/archive/legacy/uploads/hearings-letters/downloads/FINAL_-_Keystone_Letter_to_President_Obama.pdf; Natural Resources Defense Council, “NRDC Issue Brief: Climate Impacts of the Keystone XL Tar Sands Pipeline,” report, October 2013, <https://assets.nrdc.org/sites/default/files/tar-sands-climate-impacts-IB.pdf>.

³⁸ Business Roundtable, “Archived Content: Letters: Energy & Environment,” Accessed October 2, 2020, <https://www.businessroundtable.org/archive/resources/letters/energy-environment>.

³⁹ New York Times, “E.P.A. Plans to Get Thousands of Pollution Deaths Off the Books by Changing Its Math,” Lisa Friedman, May 20, 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/20/climate/epa-air-pollution-deaths.html>.

⁴⁰ E&E News, “How a revised calculation could hurt future climate rules,” Jean Chemnick, May 14, 2020, <https://www.eenews.net/stories/1063128561>.

⁴¹ Business Roundtable, “Business Roundtable Comments on the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Notice of Proposed Rulemaking,” March 10, 2020, <https://www.businessroundtable.org/business-roundtable-comments-on-the-council-on-environmental-quality-ceq-notice-of-proposed-rulemaking>.

⁴² American Bar Association, “Undercutting Environmental Law’s Magna Carta,” Jim Murphy, July 27, 2020, https://www.americanbar.org/groups/environment_energy_resources/publications/natural_resources_environment/2020-21/summer/undercutting-environmental-laws-magna-carta/.

⁴³ Washington Post, “Trump scales back landmark environmental law, saying it will help restart the economy,” Juliet Eilperin and Felicia Sonmez, July 15, 2020, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/climate-environment/2020/07/15/trump-nepa-climate-change/>.

⁴⁴ New York Times, “Trump Weakens Major Conservation Law to Speed Construction Permits,” Lisa Friedman, August 4, 2020, <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/15/climate/trump-environment-nepa.html>.

While you now apparently wish to capitalize on the broad public support for federal policies to combat the climate crisis through performative public relations stunts,⁴⁵ your record on environmental issues is wholly inconsistent with your newfound support for climate action.

Walmart and International Paper Have Poor Records on Addressing Environmental Issues

Finally, based on the records of your companies, I am concerned that you are purporting to take a leadership role among corporate executives on environmental protections. To be sure, if you have changed your views, and your commitment to addressing climate change is backed by real action, I believe this is good news. But your respective companies, particularly during your tenures as chief executive officers (CEOs), have not had strong environmental records. Over the past two decades, Walmart has been penalized for more than 40 environmental violations, resulting in nearly \$133 million in penalties to the EPA or state regulators.⁴⁶ Similarly, since 2000, International Paper has been penalized for more than 60 environmental violations, resulting in more than \$10 million in EPA penalties.⁴⁷

The BRT report stated that you believe “corporations should lead by example,” but your companies have not done so.⁴⁸ The public deserves to understand how you can claim to support new environmental protections when your companies have failed to lead in terms of environmental safeguards, and have instead contributed significantly to its degradation. In order to show that your words are not empty, I urge you, as BRT member CEOs, to be the first of the BRT executives to outline concrete actions to meet the new BRT commitments, detail specific climate change policies that your companies will support or oppose, and publicly report the specific commitments, metrics, and progress for how you will meet these commitments.

BRT’s Failure to Live Up to Past Commitments

I am also worried that the failure to back up the rhetoric on previous BRT commitments may indicate that the new climate statement is yet another empty BRT promise. Last year, the BRT issued a statement reversing a long-held principle that “corporations exist principally to serve shareholders” and instead committed to delivering value to a larger group of stakeholders, including workers, consumers, and communities.⁴⁹ But as I wrote to Mr. McMillon and Jamie Dimon, the previous BRT board chair,⁵⁰ last month, one year after the release, it was “clear that the signers of the [BRT’s *Statement on the Purpose of a Corporation*] have not kept these

⁴⁵ Pew Research Center, “Two-Thirds of Americans Think Government Should Do More on Climate,” Alec Tyson and Brian Kennedy, June 23, 2020, <https://www.pewresearch.org/science/2020/06/23/two-thirds-of-americans-think-government-should-do-more-on-climate/>.

⁴⁶ Good Jobs First, “Violation Tracker Parent Company Summary: Walmart,” Accessed September 24, 2020, https://violationtracker.goodjobsfirst.org/prog.php?parent=walmart&order=primary_offense&sort=asc.

⁴⁷ *Id.*

⁴⁸ Business Roundtable, “Addressing Climate Change: Principles and Policies,” report, September 16, 2020, <https://s3.amazonaws.com/brt.org/Business-RoundtableAddressingClimateChangeReport.September2020.pdf>.

⁴⁹ Business Roundtable, “Business Roundtable Redefines the Purpose of a Corporation to Promote ‘An Economy That Serves All Americans,’” press release, August 19, 2019, <https://www.businessroundtable.org/business-roundtable-redefines-the-purpose-of-a-corporation-to-promote-an-economy-that-serves-all-americans>.

⁵⁰ Business Roundtable, “Walmart President and CEO Doug McMillon Named Chairman of Business Roundtable,” press release, September 19, 2019, <https://www.businessroundtable.org/walmart-president-and-ceo-doug-mcmillon-named-chairman-of-business-roundtable>.

commitments and that the BRT... has been lobbying for these CEO's narrow, short-term interests rather than the broad group of stakeholders espoused in the *Statement*.”⁵¹

You responded to my concerns earlier this month, with yet another inadequate reply that failed to address how BRT companies are not acting on their previous commitments.⁵² In this response, you stated that you “continue to welcome the opportunity to engage with [me] and other members of Congress on this important issue,” yet you refused to answer the questions in my letter and refused to state how companies are acting on the commitments they made in the 2019 *Statement*.⁵³ Rather than provide reports of progress, you simply asserted that your commitments were met and provide a series of anecdotal evidence.⁵⁴ If, as you claim “[y]our companies’ actions speak for themselves,” you would require BRT companies to publicly report their progress, but, unfortunately, you have yet again declined to make any commitments and instead reiterated your empty rhetoric.⁵⁵

Questions

If the BRT is serious this time about its commitments to address the climate crisis, it must provide detailed information to the public about its concrete actions to require corporations to meet these commitments, detail specific policies that BRT will support or oppose, and publicly report the specific commitments, metrics, and progress of its member companies as they strive to meet these commitments. Failure to do so would indicate that the new statement is yet another empty press release by the BRT, designed to boost its public image without taking any action that would merit it.

In order to better understand whether and how BRT will issue new requirements for its member companies to meet its new climate commitments, I ask that you respond to the following questions by Monday, November 23 2020.

1. The Business Roundtable’s new principles and policies to address climate change calls on businesses and governments around the world to “work together to limit global temperature rise this century to well below 2 degrees Celsius above preindustrial levels, consistent with the [goals] of the Paris Agreement.”⁵⁶
 - a. Will the BRT require that member CEOs commit to each produce public annual or quarterly reports on how the companies they represent have operationalized

⁵¹ Letter from Senator Warren to Business Roundtable Immediate Past Chairman of the Board of Directors Jamie Dimon and Business Roundtable Chairman of the Board of Directors Doug McMillon, September 17, 2020, <https://www.warren.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/2020.09.17%20Letter%20to%20the%20Business%20Roundtable%20Re%20one-year%20anniversary%20of%20their%20Statement%20of%20Principles.pdf>.

⁵² Letter from Doug McMillon and Joshua Bolton to Senator Elizabeth Warren, October 2, 2020, https://s3.amazonaws.com/brt.org/Business-Roundtable_LettertoSenatorWarrenOct2020-2.pdf.

⁵³ *Id.*

⁵⁴ *Id.*

⁵⁵ *Id.*

⁵⁶ Business Roundtable, “Addressing Climate Change: Principles and Policies,” report, September 16, 2020, <https://s3.amazonaws.com/brt.org/Business-RoundtableAddressingClimateChangeReport.September2020.pdf>.

support for the policy proposals indicated in the report, including their companies' work on climate resilience and mitigation?

- i. If so, please explain how these reports will include measured demonstrations of progress on each policy proposal.
 - ii. Will you, as BRT member CEOs, commit to being among the first of the BRT executives to outline concrete actions to meet the new BRT commitments, detail specific climate change policies that your companies will support or oppose, and publicly report the specific commitments, metrics, and progress for how you will meet these commitments?
- b. The report stated that the BRT supports “a portfolio of complementary policies,”⁵⁷ but the BRT declined to provide specific information about the policies it will support and oppose, particularly as it relates to carbon pricing.
- i. The BRT report is full of references to supporting “market-based” approaches and solutions to address the climate crisis.⁵⁸ Please explain what the BRT means by “market-based” carbon pricing solutions that it would support.
 1. Will the BRT oppose carbon pricing measures if they are tied to the weakening of EPA authority to regulate greenhouse gas emissions?
- c. The BRT acknowledges that “[m]any companies seek to be transparent around their approaches and progress” on improving efficiency and reducing greenhouse gas emissions and that “[i]t is important for companies to continue to engage on, and disclose when appropriate, material risks that may be driven by climate change as well as the business opportunities associated with advancing low-carbon solutions.”⁵⁹ Despite these acknowledgements of the need for investors and the public to understand the impact of climate change on businesses, the BRT called for climate risk disclosures to be “voluntary and industry supported.”
- i. Please explain why the BRT does not support mandatory climate risk disclosure, such as the disclosure regime required under my *Climate Risk Disclosure Act*, in order to prevent the “lack of common definitions and standards for climate-related data” that is “hindering the ability of market participants and regulators to monitor and manage climate risk” and “a barrier to effective climate risk management.”⁶⁰

⁵⁷ Business Roundtable, “Addressing Climate Change: Principles and Policies,” report, September 16, 2020, <https://s3.amazonaws.com/brt.org/Business-RoundtableAddressingClimateChangeReport.September2020.pdf>.

⁵⁸ *Id.*

⁵⁹ *Id.*

⁶⁰ Commodity Futures Trading Commission, “Managing Climate Risk in the U.S. Financial System: Report of the Climate-Related Market Risk Subcommittee, Market Risk Advisory Committee of the U.S. Commodity Futures Trading Commission,” report, September 9, 2020, <https://www.cftc.gov/sites/default/files/2020-09/9-9->

2. The Business Roundtable has opposed strengthening environmental safeguards during the Obama administration and has supported rollbacks of environmental safeguards, including implementation of the *National Environmental Policy Act*, during the Trump administration.⁶¹
 - a. Please explain how the Business Roundtable’s statement that “corporations should... support sound public policies... to address climate change”⁶² is consistent with its policy positions, including support for the Keystone XL tar sands pipeline, opposition to increased air quality standards, and support for rollbacks of NEPA implementation.⁶³
 - i. To be consistent with the new BRT belief that “the world must work together to limit global temperature rise this century to well below 2 degrees Celsius above preindustrial levels, consistent with the Paris Agreement” and that “the United States and the international community must aggressively reduce [greenhouse gas] emissions,”⁶⁴ will the BRT publicly issue statements reversing their past support for expanding fossil fuel infrastructure and various Trump administration environmental rollbacks?⁶⁵

20%20Report%20of%20the%20Subcommittee%20on%20Climate-Related%20Market%20Risk%20-%20Managing%20Climate%20Risk%20in%20the%20U.S.%20Financial%20System%20for%20posting.pdf.

⁶¹ Business Roundtable, “Archived Content: Letters: Energy & Environment,” Accessed October 2, 2020, <https://www.businessroundtable.org/archive/resources/letters/energy-environment>.

⁶² Business Roundtable, “Addressing Climate Change: Principles and Policies,” report, September 16, 2020, <https://s3.amazonaws.com/brt.org/Business-RoundtableAddressingClimateChangeReport.September2020.pdf>.


⁶³ Business Roundtable, “165 Business Leaders Support Keystone XL in Letter to President Obama,” press release, October 9, 2013, https://s3.amazonaws.com/brt.org/archive/legacy/uploads/hearings-letters/downloads/FINAL_-_Keystone_Letter_to_President_Obama.pdf; Business Roundtable, “Archived Content: Letters: Energy & Environment,” Accessed October 2, 2020, <https://www.businessroundtable.org/archive/resources/letters/energy-environment>; Business Roundtable, “Business Roundtable Comments on the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Notice of Proposed Rulemaking,” March 10, 2020, <https://www.businessroundtable.org/business-roundtable-comments-on-the-council-on-environmental-quality-ceq-notice-of-proposed-rulemaking>.

⁶⁴ Business Roundtable, “Addressing Climate Change: Principles and Policies,” report, September 16, 2020, <https://s3.amazonaws.com/brt.org/Business-RoundtableAddressingClimateChangeReport.September2020.pdf>.

⁶⁵ New York Times, “The Trump Administration Is Reversing 100 Environmental Rules. Here’s the Full List.,” Nadja Popovich, Livia Albeck-Ripka, and Kendra Pierre-Louis, July 15, 2020, <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/climate/trump-environment-rollbacks.html>; New York Times, “What Trump’s Environmental Rollbacks Mean for Global Warming,” Nadja Popovich and Brad Plumer, September 17, 2020, <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/09/17/climate/emissions-trump-rollbacks-deregulation.html>.

I look forward to your responses.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator