For Immediate Release:

Governor Reynolds continues to line-up with special interests over the public interest with appointees to Carbon Sequestration Workgroups

On June 22, 2021, Governor Reynolds appointed a Carbon Sequestration Task Force. When the task force was announced, Governor Reynolds said “Because of our existing supply chain and emphasis on renewable fuel infrastructure, Iowa is in a strong position to capitalize on the growing nationwide demand for a more carbon-free economy.” There was much criticism of this task force because there were no representatives of environmental or sustainable farming organizations on the task force. The members were all representatives of industries that have a vested interest in continuing the use of fossil fuels and industrial agriculture.

In the face of this criticism the Governor’s office assured the public that there would be working groups appointed to advise the task force and that environmental and sustainable farming groups would be well-represented on the working groups. Now that the Governor has appointed the members of the working groups, it is more of the same – representatives of the fossil fuel industry and industrial agriculture.

Mike Tramontina, Chair of the Iowa Chapter of the Sierra Club, commented, “We need bold solutions beyond more of the same, business-as-usual.” He continued, “Governor Reynolds continues to line-up with special interests over the public interests. The public and consumer interests are not being evenly represented on the task force and working groups.”

Wally Taylor, Conservation Chair of the Iowa Chapter of the Sierra Club stated, “Instead it appears likely to have recommendations to continue using fossil fuels, capturing the carbon dioxide emissions and burying them underground for profit, out of sight and out of mind, rather than reducing the use of fossil fuels. This means continuing the use of industrial agriculture techniques at the expense of the climate, rather than working with nature.”
Carolyn Raffensperger, past chair of the Iowa Chapter of the Sierra Club, stated, “Iowans deserve real climate solutions to prevent further climate chaos, help us adapt to the coming problems and mitigate the damage from things like flooding, drought and derechos. The carbon sequestration task force looks like it is rigged to prop up the fossil fuel industry and delay the real solutions of regenerative agriculture, energy conservation and truly renewable energy. It is also designed to seize farmers’ land through eminent domain and give it to private companies for their CO2 pipelines.”

Jess Mazour, Conservation Program Coordinator for the Iowa Chapter, said “Iowa can mitigate climate change without false greenwashing schemes like Carbon Capture and Storage, which is pushed heavily by representatives of Reynolds' Task Force and Workgroups. We need real solutions that stop emissions at the source like cover crops, crop diversity, farming the best and idling the least profitable lands, and increasing stream buffers and grassed waterways.”

Several people connected with Sierra Club applied to be on the working group and none were appointed. “No organization has worked harder than Sierra Club to move away from fossil fuels and towards renewable energy production and sustainable agriculture than Sierra Club.,” said Pam Mackey-Taylor, Director of the Iowa Chapter of the Sierra Club. “We are disgusted that the Governor has created a completely biased task force and working groups.”

“It would be refreshing if the Governor would lead off the work of this task force by declaring her intentions with a clear emissions goal for Iowa. Instead, we see the intent to lead in order to ‘capitalize on demand’, and the make-up of the task force ends up looking craven at a time when we need strong moral leadership on climate change,” said Katie Rock, Campaign Representative for Sierra Club Beyond Coal – Iowa.”

###