Last week, California Insurance Commissioner Dave Jones launched the latest salvo in his relentless crusade to coerce the nation's leading insurance companies to divest from oil and natural gas company holdings.

After more than a year in the making, Jones unveiled the Climate Risk Carbon Initiative, a searchable database of "detailed financial data about the level and types of carbon-based investments held by all insurance companies that write $100 million or more in premiums nationally."

In a news release announcing the creation of this database last January, Jones said, "My decision to … require insurance companies to disclose investments in the carbon economy arises from my statutory responsibility to make sure that insurance companies address potential financial risks in the reserves they hold to pay future claims.

"Knowing how much money insurers have invested in oil, gas, coal, and related companies, should inform us about any financial vulnerability the insurance industry has to a decarbonized economy, and help insurers and regulators determine how best to address this risk, including additional divestment."

In addition to announcing the creation of this database last year, Jones also asked insurers doing business in his state to "to voluntarily divest from their investments in thermal coal."

What's most troubling about Jones' latest attempt to mandate institutional divestment is that he has created a divestment "hit list" which will make it easier for activists to train their fire on individual insurance companies to pressure them to divest.

This "name and shame" tactic is a favorite of the environmental activists and has been used extensively in the protests over the Dakota Access Pipeline.

Last November, the activists at the Rainforest Action Network called on Citigroup to "halt all further loan disbursements for the Dakota Access pipeline and ensure that the project sponsors immediately halt construction, unless all outstanding issues are resolved to the full satisfaction of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe."

When that didn't get the desired response, RAN and 500 other activist groups—including 350.org, Greenpeace and the Sierra Club—sent an open letter to the CEOs of 17 banks that are financing DAPL, demanding an "immediate halt to financing the DAPL."

"The undersigned organizations," they wrote, "are closely watching how the banks providing financial support to the project are acting on the ever worsening situation on the ground, including your bank."

The fact that Jones, an elected official, has developed a "Scarlet Letter Database" aimed at aiding extremist activists in undermining the financing of a critical part of our economy is nothing less than shameful.

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Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL)