

As It Happens

with Carol Off and Jeff Douglas

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Student says U of T president 'cowardly' for refusal to divest

"Appalling and shameful." That's how University of Toronto student Amanda Harvey-Sanchez describes this week's decision by the school's president not to pull the university's investments out of the fossil fuel industry.

Earlier on *As It Happens*, [Carol spoke with the university's president Meric Gertler](#). He says he believes there are better ways to fight climate change, such as investing in research and development.

"He was handed divestment on a silver platter and to reject that . . . is a cowardly political move."

- Amanda Harvey-Sanchez, student activist

But Harvey-Sanchez says Gertler had the opportunity to put the university on the right side of history. Instead, she says, he failed completely.

Gertler's decision to reject divestment came after a [committee struck by the university recommended](#) some targeted divestment from certain companies.

"His committee made the recommendation based on scientific fact and strong morals. He was handed divestment on a silver platter. And to reject that, when he had the support of his entire U of T community, is a cowardly political move."

Harvey-Sanchez, who is also a member of the environmental group [350.org](#), adds that the university had been praised for its move towards divestment, an effort known as the "Toronto Principle." But says that now that praise is very quickly turning to shame.

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