



THE NATIONAL RELIGIOUS PARTNERSHIP FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

U.S. CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES OF CHRIST
JEWISH COUNCIL FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS EVANGELICAL ENVIRONMENTAL NETWORK

January 30, 2014

President Barack H. Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We write to you as leaders representing an alliance of diverse religious traditions including Jewish, Catholic, Evangelical and Protestant groups, concerning your State of the Union address. As senior religious leaders representing these organizations, we value the actions you have taken to reduce carbon pollution and your commitment to address climate change through your Climate Action Plan as expressed in the State of the Union.

We appreciate the comprehensive nature of your Plan and its goal to cut carbon pollution, prepare the United States for climate impacts, and lead international efforts to address global climate change. We also are grateful for your desire to protect God's creation that you expressed publically prior to announcing the Climate Action Plan.

The broader religious community shares a deep conviction that the issue of global climate change presents an unprecedented threat to the integrity of life on Earth and a challenge to values that bind us as human beings. We know that the consequences of climate change are not felt equally across communities within our own country and those around the world. Impacts fall most heavily on those who have done the least to create the problem and who possess the fewest resources to adapt.

For the religious community, our priorities regarding climate change reflect several moral requirements: to protect and assist the poorest peoples and nations, to care for God's creation, and to fulfill our obligation to future generations.

A critical moral measure of any society is how well it serves those in need. Policies and programs must be crafted and resources must be found to address effectively the disproportionate and unjust burdens that fall on the most vulnerable in our nation and around the world. Our notion of the common good calls us to be in solidarity with those impacted by climate change while avoiding the temptation to pass this problem along to future generations as a result of our own neglect or narrow interests.

In the coming months as you make key decisions regarding climate change and energy policy, we urge you to be guided by a moral framework that includes not only being responsible stewards of God's creation, but protecting poor and vulnerable populations in the US and abroad while meeting our obligations to future generations. As policies are developed we insist that they do not add to the burdens already felt by those in poverty at home and abroad. Finally, we ask that these policies promote energy conservation and the responsible development and use of alternative and clean-energy sources.

We assure you of our continuing prayers and best wishes for you and your staff as you work to address this urgent global challenge confronting humanity.

Respectfully yours,



Tyler Edgar
Executive Director, Creation Justice Ministries



Rabbi Steve Gutow
President and CEO, Jewish Council for Public Affairs



Reverend Mitch Hescoc
President and CEO, Evangelical Environmental Network



Sarah Levinson
Managing Director, Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life



Dan Misleh
Executive Director, Catholic Coalition on Climate Change



Most Reverend Thomas G. Wenski
Archbishop of Miami
Chairman, Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development
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Jim Winkler
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