

July 2, 2020

Brian Moynihan
Bank of America Corporate Center
100 North Tryon Street
Charlotte, NC 28255

Dear Mr. Moynihan,

As religious leaders across a broad spectrum of traditions, we are committed to protecting God's creation and join in solidarity with the Gwich'in people in Alaska. We are writing to urge you to oppose oil and gas exploration and development in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

Oil drilling in the Arctic Refuge would significantly compromise the spiritual wellbeing and livelihoods of an indigenous community and compound the devastating and unevenly distributed climate impacts already being felt in the Arctic Refuge and in communities of color across the U.S. To combat these injustices, we should be moving towards efficient energy that produces low levels of pollution, not supporting the extraction of more fossil fuels.

Drilling in the Arctic Refuge impacts the delicate eco-system that God created. The coastal plain provides vital habitat for polar bears, migratory birds and other species and is the calving ground of the Porcupine Caribou Herd. Drilling in the Arctic Refuge not only will devastate wildlife both in Alaska and the lower 48 states, but will decimate the Gwich'in people, who for ten thousand years have depended upon the Porcupine Caribou herd and a healthy Coastal Plain to survive. Drilling would also threaten sacred spaces held in reverence by the Gwich'in people, a majority of which are Episcopalian.

Faith communities and religious leaders have long opposed drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Our commitment to protecting the Arctic Refuge is inspired by our dedication to defending all of God's creation, including the fundamental rights of the Gwich'in people both in securing their livelihoods and religious liberties. That commitment is also rooted in our vision of a sustainable and just future that relies on clean energy.

We live in an interconnected world and the task of supplying energy is inseparable from the twofold duty to care for those living in poverty and the earth. Short-term economic growth should not affect intergenerational environmental consequences and pollute the air we breathe. As Pope Francis outlined in *Laudato Si*, we are called to renew our relationships with God, one another and the created world. Drilling in the Arctic Refuge runs contrary to that call.

As a financial institution, Bank of America can demonstrate their commitment to sustaining our common home, upholding justice and protecting human rights. Other major financial institutions like Goldman Sachs, JPMorgan Chase, Citigroup, Morgan Stanley and Wells

Fargo have already announced that they will not fund any new oil and gas development in the Arctic Refuge. The vast majority of American people continue to oppose drilling in the Arctic Refuge.

It is our hope that you will join the faith community in recognizing that the Arctic Refuge is a precious gift that deserves our best efforts at stewardship and preservation by doing all that you can to safeguard the renowned and sacred wilderness of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

Sincerely,
LeeAnne Beres
Executive Director
Earth Ministry

Maurice Bloem
Executive In Charge
Church World Service

Rev. Dr. Ken Brooker Langston
Executive Director
Disciples Center for Public Witness

Jennifer E. Copeland, Ph.D.
Executive Director
North Carolina Council of Churches

Rev. Jane Fields
Executive Director
Maine Council of Churches

The Rev. Mary Anne Glover
Transitional General Minister
Virginia Council of Churches

Rev. Jimmie R. Hawkins
Director
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Office of Public Witness

Rev. Mitch Hescox
President/CEO
Evangelical Environmental Network

Rev. Dr. Nathan Hosler
Director, Office of Peacebuilding and Policy
Church of the Brethren

Rev. Dr. Russell Meyer
Executive Director
Florida Council of Churches

Harriett Jane Olson
General Secretary/CEO
United Methodist Women

Rabbi Daniel Swartz
Executive Director
Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life

Rabbi Jenni Rosenn
Founder and CEO
Dayenu: A Jewish Call to Climate Action

Rev. Sandra L. Strauss
Director of Advocacy & Ecumenical Outreach
Pennsylvania Council of Churches

Bishop John White
Fourth Episcopal District
African Methodist Episcopal Church

Jim Winkler
General Secretary
National Council of Churches USA

Carol Zinn, SSJ
Executive Director
Leadership Conference of Women Religious