

October 4, 2017

Senator Bob Casey  
Senator Patrick Toomey  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Casey and Senator Toomey:

As faith leaders we recognize our responsibility to care for God's creation. Water, one of God's gifts, is a fundamental component of all life and for many faith communities part of sacred rituals such as baptism.

Because water is such an integral part of our physical and spiritual wellbeing, we are working to protect and conserve water in our own communities. Across Pennsylvania we are conducting blessing of the water events to highlight the importance of God's gift of water, as well as remind our communities that we must never take it for granted or squander it.

We are calling on policymakers to join us in caring for water. We ask policymakers to work diligently and tirelessly to ensure that we all have access to clean water, whether that be from our tap or in God's waterways and wetlands. We urge Congress in particular to ensure that funding is made available to provide infrastructure that supports clean water in the US and that proper resources are available to the Environmental Protection Agency to ensure clean water. In particular, we call on you to provide critical funding for the Clean Water Act and Safe Drinking Water Act. When properly funded and implemented, these laws ensure that our water supply is clean and reliable and that we have access to healthy waterways and wetlands.

Any federal budget should provide the necessary resource to promote water quality standards. The pollution of waterways and the erosion of critical water infrastructure continue to be a public health threat. The infrastructure that support clean water in the United States is in dire need of repairs and \$1 trillion will be needed in the next 25 years to repair and expand U.S. drinking water infrastructure. A 2013 report released by the Environmental Protection Agency found that more than half—55 percent—of streams and rivers across the country are in poor condition to support aquatic life.

Pennsylvania has more than 84,000 miles of streams and rivers and some 4,000 lakes and impoundments. These waters are in need of our protection. Not only do they provide valuable recreation opportunities, food sources, and much needed drinking water, they are a precious part of God's creation.

Robust funding will be needed to improve water quality in the United States and in Pennsylvania, particularly for those disproportionately impacted communities whose health has suffered because of water pollution.

As communities of faith across a broad spectrum of traditions, we understand water as a symbol of preservation, cleansing, and renewal. Water is a gift from God. We hope that you will join us

in committing to protecting clean water so that we can ensure the health and wellbeing of our communities and all creation.

Sincerely,

Ms. Phyllis Terwilliger  
United Methodist Women  
Clarks Summit, PA

Rev. Andrew Edwards  
St John Lutheran Church  
Fairview, PA

Ann Pinca  
St. James Lutheran Church  
Lebanon, PA

Mrs. Kathleen Schmick  
Lititz, PA

Rev. Mark Terwilliger  
Countryside Community Church - a United Methodist Fellowship  
Clarks Summit, PA

Pastor Paul Metzloff  
Holy Trinity Lutheran Church  
Dallas, PA

Rev. Sandra Strauss  
Pennsylvania Council of Churches  
Harrisburg, PA

Rev. D John Woodcock  
Church of the Loving Shepherd  
West Chester, PA

Rev. Rebecca Booher  
Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Ligonier Valley  
Ligonier, PA

Sr. Kathleen Parisi  
Sisters of St. Francis Foundation  
Aston, PA

Rev. Inge Williams  
Friedens Church  
Shoemakersville, PA

Rev. Aaron Donnelly  
St. Paul CME  
Chester, PA

Rev. Dale D. Dennis, II  
Russell Tabernacle CME  
Chester, PA

Sister Mary Jessica Terek  
Pennsylvania

Sister Andrea Likovich  
Pennsylvania

Peggy Miro  
Pastoral Counselor  
Pennsylvania

Rev. Larry Marcus  
Greater Faith Baptist  
Philadelphia, PA

Rev. James Moore  
Second Mt. Zion Baptist  
Philadelphia, PA

Rev. Joseph D. Lewis  
Trinity AME Zion  
Pittsburgh, PA

Rev. Willie Dixon  
Wesley Union AME Zion  
Harrisburg, PA

Anita Mentzer  
Unitarian Universalist Pennsylvania Legislative Advocacy Network  
Harrisburg, PA

