

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

