

May 9, 2017

President Donald Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As members of a coalition of diverse faith traditions, we are united across theological lines and called by our commitment to care for all of God's creation and to stand with vulnerable communities, both across the world as well as right here in the United States. Included in our coalition are many faith organizations that provide direct accompaniment, technical support and post-disaster relief to frontline communities everywhere. These communities daily face the devastating impacts of dramatically changing weather patterns. Climate change disproportionately affects the world's poorest communities; our faith traditions compel us to bear prophetic witness to their suffering.

It is in keeping with our deeply held religious values that we write to urge that the United States remains a signatory to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Paris Agreement and fulfills our commitments under that agreement.

As people of faith, we believe that we have a responsibility to be caretakers of Divine creation - to preserve our ecosystems for future generations and to ensure the human dignity and worth of all people. The ongoing climate crisis places a disproportionate burden on women and children, communities of color, low-income communities, and tribal nations both in the United States and globally.

Weather events such as hurricanes, floods, and drought can create great instability for individuals, families, and entire nations. It can mean losing their livelihoods, incomes, homes and land. It can also lead to an increase in conflict, hunger, disease, displacement, and human trafficking.

Many people in the United States live at or below the poverty line, including members of our own congregations. The Paris Agreement is a historic pact that will not only protect vulnerable populations, but benefit the United States' economy and society. It will reduce carbon emissions, result in long-term energy savings, and foster growth and job creation in the emerging alternative energy market. Efforts to address climate change are, at their core, efforts to protect all of earth's inhabitants, especially poor and vulnerable communities.

There are also broad international consequences to exiting the Paris Agreement or failing to meet domestic reduction goals. If the United States withdraws from the agreement or halts all efforts to reduce carbon emissions, we will face diplomatic ramifications that could undercut cooperation on other global efforts that are in the interests of the United States. Exiting the agreement would send the message that the United States cannot be trusted as a leader and partner in global affairs.

The need for global leadership could not be more urgent. We believe that the United States can and must play a leadership role in addressing the environmental challenges which threaten our planet, our security, the health of our families, and the fate of communities throughout the world.

For these reasons, we join together to urge you, as the President of the United States, to remain in the Paris Agreement and to meet our commitments in that agreement. The Paris Agreement will safeguard God's creation, protect the vulnerable, address the impacts of climate change and fulfill our moral obligation to future generations.

Sincerely,

American Jewish World Service
Coalition for the Environment and Jewish Life
Columbian Center for Advocacy and Outreach
Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, U.S. Provinces
Church World Service
The Episcopal Church
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Franciscan Action Network
Friends Committee on National Legislation
Interfaith Power & Light
Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns
Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Washington Office
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd
Office of Social Justice, Christian Reformed Church in North America
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
Sisters of Mercy of the Americas' Institute Justice Team
UUSC: Unitarian Universalist Service Committee
Union for Reform Judaism
Unitarian Universalist Ministry for Earth
Unitarian Universalist Association
The United Methodist Church - General Board of Church and Society
Young Evangelicals for Climate Action

CC: The Honorable Rex Tillerson
The Honorable Scott Pruitt
The Honorable Wilbur Roos
The Honorable Steve Mnuchin
The Honorable Bob Corker
The Honorable Ben Cardin