

June 20, 2016

The Honorable Lindsey Graham,
Chair, Appropriations Subcommittee on the Department of State,
Foreign Operations, and Related Programs

The Honorable Patrick Leahy,
Ranking Member

Re: International Environmental Funds

Dear Senators Graham and Leahy:

Your leadership as Chair and Ranking Member of the Appropriations Subcommittee on the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs in addressing the issues of poverty and its causes around the world is much appreciated.

There is a long tradition in our country of strong bi-partisan support for doing what is in our national interest and consistent with American values in the area of foreign relations. This has included helping poor countries with natural disasters, combating AIDS through President Bush's initiative, and tackling diseases like malaria.

We write as evangelical Christians who care about what poverty, environmental degradation, and climate change are doing to the poor in poor countries. Millions in our communities are supportive of policies that reflect our Christian values of love of neighbor and care for those whom Jesus called "the least of these" (Mt. 25). These include the National Association of Evangelicals which last October adopted the Cape Town Commitment¹ of the Lausanne Movement (founded Billy Graham and John Stott).

Probably the most serious and urgent challenge faced by the physical world now is the threat of climate change. This will disproportionately affect those in poorer countries, for it is there that climate extremes will be most severe and where there is little capability to adapt to them. World poverty and climate change need to be addressed together and with equal urgency.²

Addressing poverty and the impacts of climate change on the poor means providing the necessary aid to help those in need. This includes not only adaptation to climate disruption but transforming energy poverty into energy prosperity, thereby building a foundation for education, healthcare, and an expanding economy. It is also in keeping with our nation's humanitarian values and basic sense of fairness. Finally, doing so is consistent with our

¹ The Cape Town Commitment, *The Lausanne Movement*, 2011, <http://www.lausanne.org/content/ctc/ctcommitment>

² **Caring for God's Creation: A Call to Action**, NAE Resolution, October 2015, <http://nae.net/caring-for-gods-creation/>

national security, given the instability created by both poverty and climate impacts. In the words of Admiral Lopez (Ret.): *"You have very real changes in natural systems that are most likely to happen in regions of the world that are already fertile ground for extremism."*

For all these reasons we ask that for FY 2017 you support the appropriation of the full request for the International Environmental Funds, including the \$750 million requested for the Green Climate Fund.

Thank you for your consideration of our views, and for your service to our country.

Sincerely,

Galen Carey
Vice President of Government Relations
National Association of Evangelicals

Mitchell Hescox
President/C.E.O.
The Evangelical Environmental Network

Jenny Yang
Vice President of Advocacy and Policy
World Relief

Randy Brinson (M.D.)
President
Christian Coalition of Alabama

John Lyons
President
World Hope

Peter Vander Meulen
Coordinator, Office of Social Justice.
Christian Reformed Church

Scott Sabin
Executive Director
Plant With Purpose

cc
Senator Kirk
Senator Collins,
Senator Corker
Senator Daines
Senator Merkley