

April 11, 2025

Dear Administrator Zeldin,

As faith-based organizations and religious institutions representing millions of Americans from diverse traditions, we are deeply concerned about the Environmental Protection Agency's intent to undo over two-dozen critical, life-saving protections against pollution. We also are dismayed with efforts to reduce staffing needed to protect human health. Since its founding in 1970, the mission of EPA has been "to protect human health and the environment." Over the past decades, EPA has helped to implement bipartisan, common-sense safeguards against dangerous pollutants like mercury, soot, carbon, and methane emissions. These safeguards have helped save countless lives and improved the quality of life in communities across the nation. We urge EPA to stay true to its mission.

Our faith traditions find common ground in fundamental moral truths. We believe that life is sacred. We believe we have a universal mandate to respect and care for all human life, paying particular care to the wellbeing of people or communities that are most vulnerable. And we believe that we are called to be stewards of our common home, given to us by the Creator.

For decades we have worked alongside EPA to advance the common commitment to care for human health and the environment. This work to prevent pollution has helped protect children's health and wellbeing, reduced incidents of asthma, dementia and cancer, and ensured farmers, and other businesses which rely on a healthy and stable environment, can thrive.

We urge EPA to remain true to its mission by addressing:

**The Endangerment Finding:** Climate change is not a religion - it is a devastating reality negatively impacting rural, urban and suburban communities along the coast and in the interior of the U.S. Repealing the endangerment finding, which classifies climate pollution as a threat to public health and welfare and is grounded in scientific consensus, would strip away protections that save lives and slash climate pollution. No amount of reimagining can erase the reality that farmers are suffering from droughts and unpredictable weather, families are being displaced by severe weather and wildfires, and children and the elderly are experiencing unprecedented health burdens due to climate change-induced extreme temperatures and polluted air and water. EPA can and must play a role in reducing carbon and other emissions that contribute to a changing climate.

**Capacity:** EPA's mission is only attainable if it has adequate staffing to implement its programs. EPA staff, working with communities on the ground, provide important scientific and regulatory services. The closing of science offices, reduction of staff, and other measures that negatively impact EPA's human resources will hinder the agency's ability to fulfill its critical mission.

**Safeguards:** EPA has worked to strengthen safeguards against pollutants like mercury, soot, methane, and carbon pollution by better regulating pollution from cars, trucks, power plants, and the oil and gas industry. These safeguards are projected to save over 200,000 lives, avoid over 100 million asthma attacks, and deliver over \$250 billion net benefits annually through 2050. EPA's stated intent to remove these safeguards is irresponsible and will have disastrous impacts on human health and the environment. EPA must remain steadfast in its pursuit of a healthy environment for the benefit of all of us by retaining and expanding existing pollution safeguards.

Recent proposals to eliminate the endangerment finding and regulatory safeguards for clean air and water, as well as actions to reduce staffing resources, threaten human life and desecrate our common home. This betrayal of EPA's mission and its responsibility to the American people will harm both current and future generations.

We firmly uphold the dignity and sanctity of all life and denounce the abandonment of those in need. To this end, we urge you to ensure that EPA does not cede its power to short-sighted demands or partisan politics but instead remains true to its stated mission to protect human health and the environment.

Sincerely,

Aquarian Minyan

Arizona Faith Network

Bay Area Jewish Earth Alliance

Beit Am Mid-Willamette Jewish Community Sustainability Committee

Catholic Climate Covenant

Colorado Jewish Climate Action

Creation Justice Ministries

Dayenu: A Jewish Call to Climate Action

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Friends Committee on National Legislation

Georgia Interfaith Power and Light

Higher Ground Initiative

Jewish Earth Alliance of Pennsylvania

Jewish Federation of Greater Portland

Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns

Mennonite Central Committee U.S.

National Religious Partnership for the Environment

Ohalah: The Association of Rabbis, Cantors and Rabbinic Pastors for Jewish Renewal

Passionist Solidarity Network

School Sisters of Notre Dame, Justice Office, Central Pacific Province

Sisters of Mercy of the Americas Justice Team

Texas Impact

The Episcopal Church

The United Methodist Church - General Board of Church and Society