**Christian Reformed Church Office of Social Justice Statement on Trump Administration’s Overhaul of the Clean Power Plan**

On Tuesday, August 21st, the Trump Administration and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) proposed replacing an Obama-era policy to combat climate change with the Affordable Clean Energy (ACE) Rule. The plan overhauls federal pollution regulations about coal-burning power plants and eliminating government efforts to cut carbon emissions. The ACE Rule grants states the authority to make improvements at power plants as well as easing air pollution regulations.

Research from the EPA indicates that the ACE Rule would lead to as many as 1,400 premature deaths annually by 2030 from an increase in extremely fine particulate matter that is linked to heart and lung disease, and up to 15,000 new cases of upper respiratory problems including asthma, a rise in bronchitis, and tens of thousands of missed school days.

The Trump Administration’s plan is, in part, designed to ‘save coal’, an aim which they believe can be achieved through gutting government regulation of carbon emissions, though the decline of coal as an energy source is driven far less by government regulation than it is by cheap natural gas prices and declining costs of renewable energy.

The Bible says we are to be stewards of all that God has given us. We don’t own the earth; we are called to take care of it for the Lord (Matt. 25:14-30). In the Christian Reformed Church’s (CRC) 2012 Synodical Statement on Climate Change, we declared, “We are called to ‘commit ourselves to honor all God’s creatures and to protect them from abuse and extinction, for our world belongs to God’”. Therefore, we call on government to enact policies that protect all creation and all of God’s image bearers.

Those most harmed by climate change are the poor—in the U.S. and around the world. We advocate for a vigorous response to climate change because we know that if we do not respond, people in poverty will continue to suffer the consequences. The CRC Office of Social Justice denounces the Affordable Clean Energy plan because of its ramifications on the health of Americans as well as its inevitable destruction of God’s creation.