January 5, 2025
RE: Docket ID Number EPA-HQ-OW-2025-0322

Dear Administrator Zeldin,

Given to us as a gift from God, water is a universal good essential for life. We have a moral mandate to steward and protect the waters of the United States from pollution. As faith leaders committed to justice, peace, and life, we oppose the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) newly proposed rule which drastically reduces protections for our nation's waterways.

The proposed rule excludes numerous of our nation's wetlands and streams from the Clean Water Act's pollution control and cleanup requirements. It disregards our mandate to care for God's creation and rejects the profound sanctity of human life.

The wetlands and streams that this proposal will leave vulnerable to degradation are essential for filtering pollution, replenishing groundwater, protecting wildlife habitat, and reducing flooding. As is all too often the case, the heaviest burdens of polluting or destroying these waterways will fall upon our most vulnerable brothers and sisters. Without wetlands to naturally filter pollutants and prevent flooding, communities are left with higher costs for clean water, infrastructure, and flood insurance. The proposed rule gives little to no attention to the impact on health, water quality, and flood prevention that will come with removing these protections.

To be faithful stewards of God's earth, we need protections for clean water and accountability for polluters. We urge the EPA to refrain from stripping away protections for our nation's waters.

Sincerely,

38 Faith Leaders
[Names removed for website publication]