



THE NATIONAL RELIGIOUS PARTNERSHIP FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

U.S. CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES OF CHRIST

COALITION ON THE ENVIRONMENT AND JEWISH LIFE

EVANGELICAL ENVIRONMENTAL NETWORK

January 29, 2013

President Barack H. Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President,

As senior religious leaders representing a broad spectrum of faith communities across the United States, we congratulate you on your recent reelection and assure you of our continuing prayers and best wishes as you begin a second term in office.

We recognize that in your new term of office you face several major priorities and we were greatly encouraged that you named global climate change as one of these key priorities in your inaugural address. Scientific evidence continues to point toward significant damaging impacts from climate related events, not only here in the United States, but across the globe, and particularly for some of the poorest developing countries. Some poor nations and small island states are already seeing the impacts as a matter of survival for their people and cultures.

For the religious community, our priorities regarding climate change reflect several moral requirements --- to protect and assist the poorest peoples and nations, to care for God's creation, and to fulfill our obligations to future generations.

- We believe that human impact upon the planet's climate raises fundamental moral concerns about how our use of energy resources reflects our duty to care for creation.
- We are convinced that the impacts of climate change fall most heavily on those who did the least to create the problem and have the fewest resources to adapt. A fundamental moral measure of any society is how well it serves those in need. Policies and programs must be crafted and resources must be found to effectively address the disproportionate and unjust burdens that fall on the poor and most vulnerable in our nation and around the world.
- Finally, our notion of the common good calls us to be in solidarity with everyone currently impacted by climate change while avoiding the temptation to pass this problem along to future generations as a result of our own neglect or narrow interests. We should not leave this problem for the children of tomorrow.

For the United States to be credible in helping to lead the global community in addressing climate change, we must as a nation address this issue as a very serious concern that needs greater attention. Without strong leadership and commitment by the United States, we fear that the consequences will include even greater environmental destruction and more human misery, engendering an abdication of our nation's moral leadership.

For the religious community, global climate change is not a marginal matter but is a fundamental moral priority. We assure you of our support as you provide vision and leadership to help our nation seriously address this critical challenge confronting the human family.

Thank you for your attention to our concerns.

Respectfully yours,



Most Reverend Stephen E. Blaire
Bishop of Stockton
Chairman, Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development
United States Conference of Catholic Bishops



Rabbi Steve Gutow
President and CEO, Jewish Council for Public Affairs



Reverend Mitch Hescox
President and CEO, Evangelical Environmental Network



Kathryn Lohre
President, National Council of Churches USA