

U.S. FAITH ORGANIZATIONS LETTER TO PRESIDENT JOE BIDEN ON COP26

President Joe Biden
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Nov. 8, 2021

Dear President Biden,

As faith organizations representing millions of people of faith throughout the United States, we urge you to bring the full power and persuasion of the U.S. government to achieve agreement at the COP to rapidly cut emissions and keep global warming to no more than 1.5 degrees. We ask you to also ensure that the U.S. does our fair share to support developing nations and people on the front lines of extreme climate impacts by scaling up funding, investments, and clean technology transfer.

To lead by example, the U.S. must take bold action and make serious and ambitious investments. U.S. faith communities are proving this can be done, cutting emissions in their own facilities and supporting vulnerable people and communities in the U.S. and globally. Fueled by a sense of moral responsibility to care for our neighbors, our common home, and protect our children's future, congregations and families around the country are reducing their climate pollution.

The U.S. must also have domestic policy in place to curb our own emissions, and we strongly support the climate elements of your Build Back Better plan as well as administrative actions to reduce carbon pollution.

This year's COP comes at a critical moment. We are witnessing the tragic effects of climate change play out around the world as climate disasters intensify. It is affecting every community on Earth, but it is the poor who are least responsible for the problem who suffer the most. These are the very people our faith traditions call us to care for; their lives are of utmost moral concern.

As the wealthiest country in the world and the country that has emitted more carbon pollution than any other, the U.S. has a moral responsibility to solve this crisis. We urge you to lead the world to a safer, more sustainable future where all our children, and all of God's Creation, can thrive.

This summer the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) recently released a dire report that shows that countries are not on track to achieve their Paris commitments, even as global warming is accelerating.

We now ask the U.S. government to make the following commitments and advance these priorities during the COP26 negotiations:

- **Accelerate Ambition.** We urge the U.S. to accelerate ambition and reduce carbon emissions to keep global warming to no more than 1.5C degrees above pre-industrial levels.
- **Increase Climate Finance Commitments.** We urge the U.S. to pay its fair share of the \$100 billion commitment to climate finance through the Green Climate Fund and other finance mechanisms by increasing its commitments by 2025.
- **Support Loss and Damage Finance.** We urge the U.S. to prioritize commitments to the most vulnerable populations, such as Indigenous peoples, small island nations, least developed countries, and climate-displaced persons.
- **Include Climate and Environmental Justice in Adaptation and Mitigation.** We urge the U.S. to include climate justice and reject environmental racism in adaptation and mitigation efforts, as well as ensuring a just transition for fossil-fuel workers. We also urge the U.S. to ensure protection of human rights, especially for Indigenous and local communities.

Our organizations are prepared to partner with you to help solve the climate crisis as we care for the needs of the most vulnerable. We pray for the moral leadership of the U.S. government at this critical moment. Please lead the nations of the world to a meaningful and lasting agreement to protect our climate, on behalf of all of us, and for the future of our children and the generations yet to come.

Faithfully,

Interfaith Power & Light

Aytzim: Ecological Judaism

Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life (COEJL)

Dayenu: A Jewish Call to Climate Action

Faithful America

Franciscan Action Network

Islamic Society of North America (ISNA)

Jewish Earth Alliance

Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns

Passionist Solidarity Network

Sisters of Mercy of the Americas Justice Team

The Episcopal Church

Union for Reform Judaism (URJ)

United Methodist Women

Cc: John Kerry, Gina McCarthy