

September 30, 2002

Dear Conference Committee Member:

In February of this year, over 40 heads of communion and national religious leaders—joined by over 1200 local faith leaders from across the country—sent a letter to every U.S. Senator expressing several shared beliefs regarding national energy policy.

“Concerning energy use, we believe that conservation and the development of the cleanest technologies possible are the wisest, most just, and most prudent means to fulfill our moral obligations to ensure the health and well-being of the American people and people around the world, now and for generations to come.”

As a member of the Conference Committee to H.R. 4, we write to urge you to keep in mind these important moral principles. Those 1,200 leaders and 21 state campaigns continue to call upon House and Senate Conferees to report out legislation that would:

Substantially increase vehicle fuel efficiency; encourage the auto industry to produce vehicles using hybrid-electric, fuel cell, and other clean technologies; and provide incentives for their purchase.

Prevent drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Reserve.

Invest more resources in renewable energy sources such as wind, geothermal, solar, and biomass technologies.

Include carbon dioxide as a regulated pollutant from power plants.

Increase funds for low-income energy assistance and inner-city rail and mass transit.

Signatories on the letter include leaders of major faith communities including: United Methodist, Presbyterian, United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism, Greek Orthodox, Episcopal, American Baptist, Lutheran, and Catholic bishops of major metropolitan areas. If you have questions or comments please do not hesitate to contact us directly.

Sincerely,

Douglas Grace

Director, Interfaith Climate & Energy Campaign Chair, Washington Inter-religious Staff Community Eco-Justice Working Group

John B. Johnson

February 26, 2002

Dear Senator:

As leaders of major faith communities, we write to you, our senators, at a moment of great moral urgency for our nation and the planet - God's children and God's creation. We caution Congress not to adopt an energy policy based on short-term regard for long term solutions. On May 18, 2001, 41 heads of major

denominations and senior religious leaders joined in issuing *"Let There Be Light: An Interfaith Call for Energy Conservation and Climate Justice."* In this document, they lifted up these moral stakes of a sustainable energy policy:

"At stake are: the future of God's creation on earth; the nature and durability of our economy; our public health and public lands; the environment and quality of life we bequeath our children and grandchildren. We are being called to consider national purpose not just policy."

Drawing upon scripture, the statement affirmed the importance of considering long-standing principles of faith and values concerning all of creation - stewardship, covenant, justice, prudence, solidarity, and intergenerational equity. Today, more than ever, these precepts should guide our action. Recent events remind us of the intimate link between the safety of people and the reliability of our energy system. Efforts to preserve the environment are ever more clearly necessary in order to protect human life. Security and sustainability are inextricably linked.

We agree with President Bush's statement on October 11 that said, "The less dependent we are on foreign sources of crude oil, the more secure we are at home." Yet, it is clear that we do not have sufficient domestic reserves to replace foreign oil supplies. Conservation and reducing our dependence on oil and other fossil fuels is critical to achieving energy independence and can be accomplished in economically responsible and economically beneficial ways.

Concerning energy use, we believe that conservation and the development of the cleanest technologies possible are the wisest, most just, and most prudent means to fulfill our moral obligations to ensure the health and well-being of the American people and people around the world, now and for generations to come. We have established Interfaith Climate and Energy campaigns in 21 states that are educating congregations on the link between energy conservation and renewable energy sources that benefit climate change reduction.

Rooted in moral values and concern for God's creation and God's children, we support the following energy policy initiatives:

Raise substantially vehicle fuel economy across the board in the shortest feasible timeframe, and require SUVs, minivans, and passenger cars to meet the same standard.

Develop strategies to encourage the auto industry to further design and produce vehicles using hybrid-electric, fuel cell, and other promising clean technologies, and provide incentives for their purchase.

Support substantially increased funding for inter-city rail and metropolitan mass transit to provide attractive and functional alternatives to single occupancy autos.

Fill the Strategic Petroleum Reserve and increase it with the least possible environmental damage.

We strongly oppose policies that would allow drilling or mining in our nation's dwindling wild lands and places important to the traditional cultures of indigenous peoples. We specifically oppose drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Conservation is a morally superior alternative to drilling in such places. Furthermore, conservation is also more effective, providing much greater benefits that are more permanent, rather than a modest and short-lived increase in oil supply.

Alongside energy concerns that relate directly to oil, we have longstanding distress about other health and environmental effects of energy policy, including global climate change. Therefore, we support policies

that would:

Invest significantly more resources in renewable energy research and development with a focus on wind, geothermal, solar and biomass technologies.

Include carbon dioxide as a regulated pollutant from power plants.

Apply the strictest feasible energy efficiency standards to consumer products, including air conditioners.

Increase funds for the Low Income Energy Assistance Program and other programs to alleviate economic hardship on low-income people caused by high energy prices.

Now is the time to embrace energy conservation and efficiency and alternative energy development as the central strategies of our nation's energy policy. The energy policies we adopt in the coming debate must reflect our resolve as a nation to be faithful to our values and to fulfill our obligations at a time of national crisis.

God calls humans to strive toward peace, justice, and harmony for all of creation. We have called on our congregants and communities to practice energy conservation as part of our values. Now we urgently call on the United States Congress and the Administration. As this critical issue comes forward for legislative action, we call upon our senators to reflect and act as God's stewards. The same energy policies that will help achieve peace for humankind by reducing our dependence on oil will create greater harmony within creation by protecting the environment.

Together, we can achieve energy solutions that embody and promote justice, stewardship, and intergenerational responsibility. We urge you to consider and consult these values as you evaluate the energy policy options before the nation and work to pass responsible and effective legislation.

Yours faithfully,

1,200 signatures including:

ACADEMY FOR JEWISH RELIGION
Rabbi David Greenstein, President

AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL
CHURCH
Bishop McKinley Young

ALEPH: ALLIANCE FOR JEWISH
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Rev. Dr. Stan Hastey, Executive Director

AMERICAN BAPTIST CHURCHES
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ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN
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The Most. Rev. Metropolitan Philip Saliba

CENTRAL CONFERENCE OF AMERICAN
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Rabbi Paul J. Menitoff, Executive Vice
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CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DISCIPLES OF
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CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN
Rev. Judy Mills Reimer, General Secretary

COMMUNITY OF CHRIST
Grant McMurray, President

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
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Rev. Mark Hanson, Presiding Bishop

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH
The Most Reverend Frank T. Griswold,
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His Eminence Archbishop Demitrios

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF
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KOREAN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN
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Jose Ortiz, Executive Director

MENNONITE CHURCH
Susan Mark Landis, Minister of peace and
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MORAVIAN CHURCH – NORTHERN
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NATIONAL COUNCIL OF THE CHURCHES
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Rev. Dr. Robert Edgar, General Secretary

THE ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA
His Beatitude Metropolitan Theodosius

PATRIARCHAL PARISHES – RUSSIAN
ORTHODOX CHURCH
The Most Reverend Mercurius, Bishop of
Zaraisk

PHILADELPHIA YEARLY MEETING
THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS
Friend Thomas Jeavons

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH USA
Rev. Dr. Clifton Kirkpatrick, Stated Clerk

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The Most Rev. John T. Donoghue
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President, Episcopal Council

SYRIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH OF
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His Eminence Archbishop Mor Cyril Aphrem
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