

May 27, 2014

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

Dear Mr. President,

As religious leaders representing diverse faith traditions and congregations throughout the Midwest, we are writing to you in support of your directive to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to finalize the carbon pollution rule for new power plants and to issue a strong draft rule for reducing carbon pollution from existing power plants and finalize it by June 2015.

As people of faith, we believe that climate change is a moral issue. We feel a particular responsibility to speak on behalf of those whose voices are not heard – the most vulnerable in our society and in our world, including children and future generations. Carbon pollution threatens the health of our families, our communities, and ultimately the earth. Impacts of climate-disrupting carbon dioxide emissions include severe storms, deadly heat waves, drought, flooding, and wildfires.

Carbon pollution is an environmental justice issue. Historically many power plants have been located near low-income neighborhoods, near communities of color, and in Midwest farm communities. These areas contribute much less to the problem yet are being hit the hardest in terms of health and climate impacts. Many of these citizens have preexisting health conditions that make them more vulnerable to heat waves, reduced air quality, and other consequences of burning fossil fuels. These communities also have fewer resources to adapt to climate change and therefore mitigation – reducing the causes of climate change – is critical.

In addition, we must understand the moral responsibility that we have in light of the global disparity between the amount of carbon pollution released by the United States and other developed nations in comparison to developing nations around the world. Developing nations have far less capacity for adapting to climate change, and will bear much more of the impacts. We support efforts to use these carbon pollution standards as leverage to encourage carbon pollution reductions by other developed and growing economies worldwide.

As people of faith, we look for signs of hope in moving toward the future. The Midwest's manufacturing base gives us the opportunity – and responsibility – to take the lead in developing clean energy technologies that can meet our energy needs and protect the earth for future generations. Employment in the wind and solar industries in the Midwest is on the rise. Additional clean energy jobs in energy efficiency, transmission, and research and development means that we do not have to sacrifice employment opportunities for controlling carbon pollution.

Climate change exacerbates issues on which our congregations and faith communities are already working: issues like hunger, clean water, disaster relief, refugee services, and conflict resolution, to name just a few. It is the role of faith leaders to help others connect the dots between climate change and its impacts, and to advocate for meaningful solutions. We believe that limiting carbon pollution from power plants is a part of that solution, and we urge your administration to move forward in proposing and finalizing these rules.

cc:

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Arbor Vitae

Rev. John C Helt
St. Paul's United Church of Christ
Colgate

Mr. Kermit Hovey, Jr.
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Care of Creation, USA
Madison

Pastor Twink Jan-McMahon
Pastor In Call
United Church of Christ
Madison

Sister Paula Marie Jarosz, O.P.
Chair of EARTH committee
Racine Dominicans
West Allis

Rev. Robert Jensen
Delafield Presbyterian Church
Delafield

Sister Rose Jochmann
Sisters of St. Francis of the Holy Cross
Green Bay

Rev. Jen Johnson
First Congregational Church, United
Church of Christ
Boscobel

Rev. Ben Johnston-Krase
First Presbyterian Church
Racine

Bishop Hee-Soo Jung
United Methodist Church, Wisconsin
Conference
Sun Prairie

Rev. Greg Kaufmann
Assistant to the Bishop
Northwest Synod of WI
Chetek

Mr. William E. Kilgour
Reader
Christian Science Neighbors
Madison

Rev. Tina S. Lang
Associate Pastor
1st United Methodist
Madison

Leadership Council
Sinsinawa Dominicans
Sinsinawa

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Director of Family Ministries
United Church of Christ
Wisconsin Rapids

True Lotus Peace Heather Mann
Order of Interbeing
Fitchburg

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President of the Board
Wisconsin Faith Voices for Justice
Madison

Dr Rebecca McAllister
Executive Director
Windhorse Retreat Center
Plymouth

Rev. Alan McCalister
Second Presbyterian Church
Racine

Rev. Mark McDonough
Christ Presbyterian Church
Milwaukee

Mrs. Julie McNaughton
Chair of WI Hunger Task Force
United Methodist
Menomonie

Rt. Rev. Steven Andrew Miller
Bishop
Episcopal Diocese of Milwaukee

Rev. Michael J. Mueller
St. Andrew Lutheran Church,
Racine

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Madison

Meg F. Nielsen, Associate In Ministry
Green Team Leader
St. Stephen's Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America
Monona

Rev. Dr. Dan Odden
Global Justice Task Force
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Sauk City

Rev. Dr. David Oliver-Holder
Bayfield Presbyterian Church
Bayfield

Rev. Maureen Otwell
St. Luke Episcopal
Prescott

Sister Joy Peterson
Promoter of Peace and Justice
Sinsinawa Dominicans
Sinsinawa

The Rev. Dr James Rand
Wauwatosa Presbyterian
Wauwatosa

Ms. Bev Rawling
Environment Committee Chair
Lakeshore Unitarian Universalist
Fellowship
Manitowoc

Rev. Dr. David Rhoads
Professor Emeritus
Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago
Racine

Rev. Mara Liz Rivera
First Presbyterian Church
Winneconne

Rev. Linda A. Rozumalski
West Denmark Lutheran Church
Luck

Rev. Michael Rozumalski
Pastor Emeritus
West Denmark Lutheran Church
Luck

The Rev. Dr. Michael A. Schuler
Senior Minister
First Unitarian Society of Madison
Madison

Rev. Irene Senn
RCWP
West Allis

Rev. Richard D Shaw
St. Matthew Christian Methodist
Episcopal Church
Milwaukee

Mr. Brad Sherman
Chair Board of Camp and Retreat
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Conference of the United Methodist
Church
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Racine Dominicans
Racine

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St. Stephen's Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America
Monona

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United Church of Christ of Pittsville
Pittsville

The Rev. Dr. Marlene Walker
Interim minister
James Reeb Unitarian Universalist
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Madison

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Chaplain, Dane County Jail
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Sisters of St. Dominic
Racine

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Advent Lutheran Church
Madison

Rev. Shai Wise
United Church of Christ
West Allis

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Presbyterian Church USA, Retired
Marshfield

Rev. John A Worzala Dumke
Peace Lutheran Church
Oshkosh

Rev. Susan Gilbert Zencka
Frame Memorial Presbyterian Church
Stevens Point

Pastor William W Zieche
Presbyterian Church USA, retired
Hartland

*The listing of faith community names is
for identification purposes only.