

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.  
President of the United States  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20500  
October 22, 2024

Dear President Biden,

As people of faith and conscience from across the United States, we urge you to bring the full power and persuasion of the U.S. government to achieve agreement at COP29 in Azerbaijan to rapidly cut emissions, to keep global warming to no more than 1.5 degrees, and to help broker an ambitious new global goal for international climate finance. We ask you to 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, mobilizing investments, and supporting clean technology transfers.

As Pope Francis has written in his latest Apostolic Exhortation, *Laudate Deum*, “With the passage of time, I have realized that our responses have not been adequate, while the world in which we live is collapsing and may be nearing the breaking point. In addition to this possibility, it is indubitable that the impact of climate change will increasingly prejudice the lives and families of many persons.”

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

The U.S. must have domestic policy in place to curb our country’s emissions. We strongly support the implementation of the climate-focused investments in the Inflation Reduction Act (P.L. 117-169) and the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (P.L. 117-58) that have helped spur emissions reductions in the United States. We also support administrative actions to reduce carbon pollution, including strong rules related to methane, vehicles, and power plants. Any proposal that fast tracks or expands fossil fuel infrastructure, like oil pipelines, moves us further away from reaching our climate goals and harms our beloved communities on the frontlines. As we move towards a clean energy future, impacted communities must be centered in the discussion.

This year’s Conference of Parties (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 and historically disenfranchised 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 help solve this crisis and to commit to our fair share of funding to address it. 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.

We now ask the U.S. government to make the following commitments and advance these priorities during the COP29 negotiations:

- **Accelerate Ambition on Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).** As we approach the date at which the next round of NDCs are due, we strongly urge the U.S. to release its next NDC by the end of the year to accelerate ambition and reduce U.S. carbon emissions to help keep global warming to no more than 1.5C degrees above pre-industrial levels. Our nation's next NDC should lay out plans for decarbonizing all sectors of the economy, support domestic climate adaptation, address historic environmental injustices, and outline the government's plans for providing international climate finance.
- **Increase Climate Finance Commitments.** We urge the U.S. to play a leading role in negotiating a new, ambitious, and bold global goal on international climate finance (also known as the *New Collective Quantified Goal* - or *NCQG*) that recognizes the true need for adaptation and mitigation funding in developing countries. The U.S. should pay its fair share of this global commitment, meet its full pledge to the Green Climate Fund, and provide support for other finance mechanisms in 2025 and beyond.
- **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 ensure a just transition for fossil-fuel workers. We also urge the U.S. to protect human rights, especially for Indigenous and local communities, in advancing climate solutions.

We 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,

Adamah  
American Friends Service Committee  
Aquarian Minyan  
CAST Climate Action Sea Turtles, Florida  
Church of the Brethren, Office of Peacebuilding and Policy  
Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life  
Colorado Jewish Climate Action  
Creation Justice Ministries  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
Franciscan Action Network  
Friends Committee on National Legislation  
Interfaith Power & Light  
Jewish Action Team of Citizens' Climate Lobby  
Jewish Climate Action Network NYC  
Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns  
Mennonite Central Committee U.S.  
National Religious Partnership for the Environment  
NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice  
Ohalah: Association of Rabbis and Cantors for Jewish Renewal  
Sisters of Mercy of the Americas Justice Team  
Texas Impact  
The Episcopal Church  
The Shalom Center  
The United Church of Christ  
The United Methodist Church - General Board of Church and Society  
Union for Reform Judaism

CC: John Podesta, Trigg Talley, Ali Zaidi