

May 18, 2009

Dear Members of the Energy and Commerce Committee:

As people of faith, we believe climate change is among the greatest moral challenges of our time. We believe strong and quick action must be taken to protect God's good creation and all of God's children. We therefore applaud the leadership and commitment of the Energy and Commerce Committee in crafting HR 2454, the American Clean Energy and Security Act. While we have concerns over a number of provisions that have been weakened for the sake of political compromise, we continue to believe that this legislation provides a framework and targets that are important steps in the right direction.

We are appreciative that the American Clean Energy and Security Act provides the opportunity to create thousands of new clean energy jobs, addresses US greenhouse gas emissions and works to ensure that low-income consumers are not forced to bear the financial burden of climate legislation. In particular, we are grateful for the consumer protection provisions that recognize the vulnerability of those living in poverty to the increased energy costs that come with climate legislation and provide direct assistance to low income households.

However, as noted above, there are a number of areas that need strengthening. In particular, the renewable electricity standard (RES) would not meet the standards already set in place by states around the country. A stronger RES could create thousands of jobs and save consumers billions of dollars on electricity costs.

In addition, the financial support for international adaptation assistance must be increased to provide adequate support for those already suffering from the impacts of climate change in developing countries around the world. Recent reports indicate that it will take a minimum of \$25 billion a year to help vulnerable communities adapt to the impacts of climate change that we cannot reverse or prevent. The United States is largely responsible for historic greenhouse gas emissions and must provide financial assistance to those already suffering the impacts of climate change. Any legislation should provide a minimum of \$3.5 billion in the first year to developing countries with a ramp up of funding levels over the early years of the bill.

The American Clean Energy and Security Act lays a necessary foundation to begin addressing the global climate crisis. We urge you to oppose any attempts to further weaken the bill as it goes through committee and continue moving this legislation forward while working to strengthen key provisions and ensure a just and sustainable future for all of God's Creation.

Sincerely,

Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life  
The Episcopal Church  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
National Council of Churches USA  
United Church of Christ, Justice and Peace Ministries  
United Methodist Church, General Board of Church and Society

Contact: Tyler Edgar, National Council of Churches  
202-544-2375  
tedgar@ncecojustice.org