



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

125 Catholic Leaders Sign Letter Supporting Clean Power Plan

Washington, D.C. – February 16, 2017 – One hundred and twenty-five U.S. Catholic leaders have signed a [letter](#) organized by the Catholic Climate Covenant in support of the Clean Power Plan (CPP). The CPP is a significant U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) effort to reduce carbon pollution from existing power plants 30 percent by 2030 compared to 2005 levels. The Clean Power Plan is the nation's most ambitious effort to reduce climate-changing greenhouse gas pollution but faces an uncertain future in the Trump administration. The letter has been delivered by the Catholic Climate Covenant to the new EPA administrator as well as President Trump, top Congressional leaders, and state governors.

The group of Catholic leaders – which includes college and university presidents, women and men religious, theologians, and Catholic non-profit directors – stresses that Church teaching on the care of creation is deeply connected to the protection of human life and dignity, especially of the poor and vulnerable. The leaders also highlight Pope Francis's emphasis on the "urgent need to develop policies so that, in the next few years, the emission of carbon dioxide and other highly polluting gases can be drastically reduced, for example, substituting fossil fuels and developing sources of renewable energy" (*Laudato Si'* 26).

In response to the call of His Holiness, the leaders join with the [U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops](#) and other faith leaders [who have called](#) for a national carbon pollution standard like the Clean Power Plan. In particular, the leaders believe that the Clean Power Plan "will protect public health, promote equality, address climate change, and help create new economic opportunities in communities across the country."

Nearly two-dozen states, including Oklahoma where new EPA head Scott Pruitt was attorney general, filed suit against the EPA to stop the CPP. That suit currently awaits a ruling by the DC Federal Circuit Court. The Catholic leaders continue that "if the Courts do not uphold the Clean Power Plan, then we call upon Congress to replace the CPP with new policies that will achieve the same or more ambitious carbon reduction goals. In that case, we also urge elected officials in each state to meet and exceed the carbon reduction goals identified for their state in the Clean Power Plan." However they continue that "no matter the legal fate of the CPP, we believe that Congress will need to take additional steps in the years ahead to reduce domestic carbon pollution even more." In conjunction with such legislative action, the leaders also advocate for accompanying transition programs (e.g., job training) that assist local communities which rely heavily upon some aspect of the fossil fuel industry."

Following delivery of the letter, Catholic Climate Covenant Executive Director, Dan Misleh, said, "Saint John Paul II, Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI and Pope Francis all explicitly recognized human-forced climate change as a moral issue and called on people of faith and goodwill to take action. The U.S. Catholic bishops recognize a national carbon pollution standard like the Clean Power Plan as one such important action, and this letter demonstrates the commitment of the U.S. Catholic community to prophetically advocate for policies that *care for our common home*."

For more information: info@catholicclimatecovenant.org; 202-756-5545; <http://www.catholicclimatecovenant.org>

Catholic Climate Covenant inspires and equips people and institutions to care for creation and care for the poor. Through our sixteen national partners, we guide the U.S. Church's response to climate change by educating, giving public witness, and offering resources.

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