

**Purpose of Visit:**

Call upon the U.S. government to exercise decisive leadership to mitigate climate change by supporting policies that reduce greenhouse gases and that protect people in poverty who are most vulnerable to the effects of climate change.

Our Faith Teaches:

In his historic encyclical on ecology, *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis calls on all people to care for creation and our common home. Pope Francis makes clear that our care for one another and our care for the earth are intimately connected, noting that humanity is not faced “with two separate crises, one environmental and the other social, but rather one complex crisis which is both social and environmental.” (*Laudato Si'*: On Care for Our Common Home)

A Catholic response to climate change places care for creation and care for poor and vulnerable people who are most affected by climate change impacts at the center of its response. As the U.S. Catholic bishops wrote in their pastoral statement, *Global Climate Change: A Plea for Dialogue Prudence and the Common Good*, “Action to mitigate global climate change must be built upon a foundation of social and economic justice.”

During Pope Francis’s visit to the United States in 2015, Pope Francis said, “Climate change is a problem which can no longer be left to a future generation. When it comes to the care of our ‘common home’, we are living at a critical moment of history.”

Personal Testimony (If Applicable):

Please share a story from your local community about how your own community is working to reduce carbon emissions or how vulnerable populations currently are being affected by climate change in your area (heat, flooding, etc).

What We See:

The need to dramatically reduce carbon emissions on a global scale: Scientific reports agree that global carbon emissions must be reduced to net-zero by 2050 in order to limit a global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius.

Global Community Taking Collective Action: There are currently 197 signatories to the Paris Climate Agreement, and the United States is not one of them, even though US emissions are the second highest in the world behind China. Over 790 Catholic institutions in the United States, signed the Catholic Climate Declaration, a statement in 2018 calling on the U.S to remain a global leader in reducing emissions and for the Administration to return to the Paris Agreement.

FOR SENATE:

ASK: Will the Senator publicly support climate legislation that dramatically cuts United States carbon emissions on an aggressive timeline and protects individuals and communities most vulnerable to the effects of climate change and/or resource extraction?

Specifically, we ask that the Senator:

- **Accelerate the transition to clean energy to mitigate climate change.** To limit global warming to 1.5°C and avoid the worst impacts of climate change, [net CO2 emissions need to be reduced to zero by 2050](#). This will require substantial new investments in [low-carbon technologies and energy efficiency](#). Through these investments and tax incentives to support renewable energy adoption, the electricity sector can eliminate carbon emissions by 2035, [leading to significant public health and job benefits](#). At the same time, the U.S. should offer transitional support for communities dependent on fossil fuel jobs and communities overburdened by fossil fuel pollution through legislation such as [the RECLAIM Act](#).
- **Invest in sustainable infrastructure.**
 - To improve our quality of life, preserve our environment and create stable jobs, we need significant investments in sustainable infrastructure. These investments are vital in places that have historically been underserved and are more vulnerable to natural disaster.
 - To build climate resilience and expand economic opportunity in these regions, the U.S. should: Invest in clean air, water, energy, broadband and public transportation infrastructure. These measures will [create new jobs, contribute to achieving net-zero climate pollution and boost the economy nationwide](#).
- **Prioritize communities most impacted by environmental injustice.** Legislative measures, funding and programs should prioritize Environmental Justice communities, which are most affected by environmental harm and often have the least resources to respond. We must create and support structures which allow communities of color, low-income communities and Tribal and Indigenous communities to participate meaningfully in government decision-making as our nation builds its climate resilience.
 - Strengthen the EPA's [Environmental Justice Small Grants program](#), the [Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program \(LIHEAP\)](#) and the [Weatherization Assistance Program](#) — which promote energy- efficiency and support communities on the frontlines of climate change.
 - Pass legislation such as the [Environmental Justice for All Act](#) to address the disproportionate adverse human health and environmental effects of federal laws on Environmental Justice communities.

FOR HOUSE:

ASK: Will the Representative publicly support climate legislation that dramatically cuts United States carbon emissions on an aggressive timeline and protects individuals and communities most vulnerable to the effects of climate change and/or resource extraction?

Specifically, we ask that the Representative:

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