

The Catholic Church brings a distinct perspective to the debate about climate change by lifting up the moral dimensions of this issue and the needs of the most vulnerable among us. The USCCB is focusing on particular parts of the climate change issue. Our efforts promote prudent action to address the growing impact of global climate change and pursue the common good in a very polarized debate. The bishops' primary concern is to place the needs of the poor and vulnerable at the center of climate legislation. Poor people cannot be made to bear an undue burden of the impacts of climate change or the global adjustments needed to address it.

People living in poverty—both at home and abroad—contribute least to climate change but they are likely to suffer its worst consequences with few resources to adapt and respond. The impacts of climate change—including increased temperatures, rising sea levels, and changes in rainfall that contribute to more frequent and severe floods and droughts—are making the lives of the world's poorest even more precarious. Urgent action that both addresses the growing impact of climate change and acts to protect the poor and vulnerable is needed.

To learn about Catholic teaching on climate change, read the June 2001 statement by the United States Catholic Bishops, [Global Climate Change: A Plea for Dialogue, Prudence and the](#)

Action Alert

May 4-8

Help Put the Poor First in Climate Legislation

Summary

Members of the House Energy and Environment Subcommittee will be considering climate legislation, the American Clean Energy and Security Act of 2009, in the coming week. We need your help. Please begin writing and calling your Representative (see target list below) and urge them to act now to address the serious moral dimensions of climate change, by strengthening and adequately funding provisions within the legislation that protect poor and vulnerable people. They are the ones who will bear the worst impacts of climate change and, if not properly structured, any additional burdens of necessary policies to address climate change.

Why Action is Important Now

This week of May 4-8, members of the Energy and Environment Subcommittee will likely consider significant climate legislation recently introduced by Chairman Henry A. Waxman (D-CA) of the Energy and Commerce Committee and Chairman Edward J. Markey (D-MA) of the Energy and Environment Subcommittee.

The American Clean Energy and Security Act of 2009 institutes a "cap and trade" program that would lower greenhouse gases and has the potential to generate substantial revenue by putting a price on carbon emissions.

The Catholic bishops of the United States insist that a significant portion of these resources be used to minimize the disproportionate burdens felt by those least able to cope with the impacts of climate change and policies to address it.

How You Can Respond

Urge your Representative to support a clear priority for the poor and vulnerable in climate change legislation and adequate funding for international and domestic needs:

- **International Provisions:** At least 7% of the value of the carbon credits, approximately \$7 billion, be dedicated to international adaptation to help people living in poverty in the most vulnerable developing countries adapt to climate change.
- **Domestic Provisions:** Ensure that funding provided to domestic consumers makes the needs of low-income people a clear priority by including a progressive formula and a comprehensive system so that those most in need are protected from and not harmed by any potential

[Common Good.](#)

those most in need are protected from and not harmed by any potential rise in energy prices.

Learn more about the proposed legislation by reading this article from the **Environment News Network**: [Industries Push for Free Pollution Credits](#)

The Following Members of the Subcommittee Need to Hear From Their Constituents

Call, e-mail or fax your Representative:
Find your Representative at www.house.gov
or call the Capitol Switchboard at 202-224-3121

Mike Ross, D-AR
Doris O. Matsui, D-CA
Jerry McNerney, D-CA
Lois Capps, D-CA
Jane Harman, D-CA
Mary Bono Mack, R-CA
Henry A. Waxman, D-CA
John Barrow, D-GA
Baron P. Hill, D-IN
Charlie Melancon, D-LA
John D. Dingell, D-MI
G. K. Butterfield, D-NC
Frank Pallone, Jr., D-NJ
Eliot L. Engel, D-NY
Greg Walden, R-OR
Mike Doyle, D-PA
Joseph R. Pitts, R-PA
Gene Green, D-TX
Charles A. Gonzalez, D-TX
Jim Matheson, D-UT
Rick Boucher, D-VA
Peter Welch, D-VT
Jay Inslee, D-WA
Tammy Baldwin, D-WI