



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Catholics Raise Moral Concerns about Proposed Budgetary Cuts to EPA

Washington, D.C. – May 24, 2017 – Our Catholic bishops [teach](#) that the federal budget is a moral document which reflects our priorities as a nation. The Trump Administration's 2018 fiscal year budget presented yesterday expresses priorities about which the U.S. Catholic bishops are deeply concerned.

Catholic Climate Covenant places particular focus on the dramatic and unwarranted cuts to the Environmental Protection Agency. What do these cuts say about our priorities as a society? Some within the Administration have justified these cuts to free up business from perceived onerous environmental rules. "But the first question to be asked is not whether current or future environmental regulations help or harm business," said Dan Misleh, Executive Director of Catholic Climate Covenant based in Washington, D.C. "The first question must be: Do these rules protect the health and well-being of people, especially the poor, and the environment which we all share?"

Bishop Richard Pates of Des Moines, Iowa, and the episcopal liaison to the board of directors of Catholic Climate Covenant said, "These cuts threaten the future of our children not only in the U.S. but around the world. Especially disturbing are the cuts to programs seeking to address climate change. Pope Francis has made it clear that the threat of climate change demands that 'the use of highly polluting fossil fuels – especially coal, but also oil and, to a lesser degree, gas – needs to be progressively replaced without delay' (*Laudato Si'* no. 165). This budget cuts important programs that could help reduce greenhouse gases, the major cause of the global warming we are experiencing."

Much of the clean air, water, and land that we enjoy today is a direct result of the excellent work done by the EPA, which was founded during the Nixon administration. Yet far too many families, especially in low-income communities and communities of color, live near heavily polluted areas such as Superfund and brownfields sites, incinerators and coal-fired power plants. However the Administration's budget significantly reduces or even eliminates funding for environmental justice, Superfund cleanup, and enforcement of environmental laws. Those cuts will make these families and their children, both born and unborn, even more vulnerable to the environmental contamination they unjustly endure.

Catholic Climate Covenant and its 16 national Catholic partners will work to raise the moral consequences of some of the harshest cuts in the EPA budget and other federal programs that protect our most vulnerable neighbors and the environment, and strive to create a thriving future for us all. As Congress debates the Administration's budget proposal, Catholics across the country will urge lawmakers to promote a budget that reflects our nation's capacity for compassion towards all people, especially the poor and vulnerable, and commitment to a healthy environment which is *our common home*.

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

Catholic Climate Covenant inspires and equips Catholic persons and communities 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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