

September 8, 2019

U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Member of Congress,

Religious organizations, faith leaders, and people of faith have long advocated to protect the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. The refuge is a special place in God's creation that stands alone in its unique wildness, ecological integrity, beauty, spiritual significance, and recreational opportunities.

Our communities have long opposed drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, not only because of our concern for stewarding God's creation, but also because of our commitment to stand with the Alaska Native Gwich'in Nation. The exploitation of fossil fuels that contribute to climate change threatens the subsistence practices of the Gwich'in people's ten-thousand-year-old traditions that the Gwich'in depend upon to survive. Drilling would also threaten sacred spaces held in reverence by the Gwich'in people. Our commitment to protecting the Arctic Refuge is inspired by our dedication to defending all of God's creation, including the fundamental rights of the Gwich'in people both in securing their livelihoods and religious liberties.

We therefore urge you to support H.R. 1146, the Arctic Cultural and Coastal Plain Protection Act, which restores protections to the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. As people of faith committed to God's creation and God's people we want the Arctic Refuge and its Coastal Plain protected for current and future generations.

In the Scriptural creation story of the Judeo-Christian tradition, God proclaims each piece of creation good, and the whole of it – when viewed together and in relationship – very good. It is our hope that you will join us in recognizing that such a precious gift deserves our best efforts at stewardship and preservation by doing all that you can to safeguard the renowned and sacred wilderness of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

Thank you for your consideration, and you remain in our prayers.

Sincerely,
Creation Justice Ministries
Christian Reformed Church Office of Social Justice
Congregation of Sisters of St. Agnes
The Episcopal Church
Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility
Interfaith Power & Light
Leadership Conference of Women Religious
Leadership Team – Felician Sisters of North America
Maryknoll Sisters, Eastern Region USA
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Office of Public Witness

Sisters of the Holy Cross
Sisters of Mercy of the Americas' Institute Justice Team
Sisters of the Presentation
The Union for Reform Judaism
Unitarian Universalist Service Committee
Unitarian Universalist for Social Justice
United Church of Christ, Justice and Witness Ministries
The United Methodist Church – General Board of Church and Society