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U.S. Religious Leaders Unite to Fight Global Warming

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WASHINGTON – An interfaith body of Christian, Muslim, and Jewish leaders announced a pact to fight global warming in a statement delivered to the White House and Congress on Monday.

The religious leaders, including Episcopal Church Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori, agree that humans are a major contributor to global warming based on scientific evidence.

Moreover, “An Interfaith Declaration on the Moral Responsibility of the U.S. Government to Address Global Warming” called on legislators to enact mandatory limits on greenhouse gas emissions and make earth care a priority.

“Global climate change is one of the largest and most important issues facing all people,” said Jefferts Schori, in a statement. “If we take seriously our own tradition’s teaching about interconnectedness, we cannot fail to see that poverty and hopelessness is intimately linked to climate change. We must challenge the world to do what we can to minimize its effects on the least of us.”

The declaration closely follows the release of the most recent report by the Intergovernmental Panel of Climate Change, which claims humans are largely responsible for climate change and its effects including natural disasters, disease outbreaks, and massive forced migration.

Rabbi David Saperstein, director of the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism, noted that global warming is not simply a “scientific or political issue – it is a moral issue.”

In light of this, he called on religious people to be the “moral voice,” raising the issue before the government and the public demanding action.

“The statement’s signers represent millions of the faithful who see beyond their differences to a common need and goal: protection of life on earth,” commented the Rev. Sally G. Bingham, president of The Regeneration Project’s Interfaith Power and Light, according to Episcopal Life.

A climate summit hosted by Bingham is credited as the declaration’s starting point.

“Predictions of the effects of global warming paint a bleak picture for millions, maybe billions, of people,” warned James A. Jordan, chair of the Executive Council Committee on Science, Technology and Faith, according to Episcopal Life. “Not only must we work to slow global warming, we must prepare to care for those who will be dispossessed and impoverished by its effects.”

A recent survey conducted by The Gallup Poll showed that the majority of Americans were “worried” about global warming and its potential threat to the earth, with 50-69 percent stating they were concerned about dangers such as more powerful hurricanes or more frequent flooding and droughts.

The religious leaders have planned a series of advocacy activities including print and online advertisements, meetings with national legislators, and mobilization campaigns in congregations.

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