

Dear Member of Congress,

Religious traditions teach us to revere and care for all life on Earth (Genesis 2:15, John 3:16-17, Qur'an 55:1-13, Buddhist First Precept) yet the presence of unregulated toxic chemicals in the environments where we all live, work, play, and pray threatens the health of God's people and the rest of Creation. As state level faith-based organizations seeking justice for the most vulnerable and serving as stewards of God's Creation, we see firsthand how toxic chemicals can affect the lives of God's people and other parts of Creation.

Toxic chemicals enter and harm our bodies, plants and animals, and natural systems through air and water pollution, and chemicals in household products including cleaners, personal care products, plastic food and drink containers, textiles, and children's toys. These chemicals are linked to chronic and serious health conditions such as cancer, type II diabetes, developmental disabilities, Alzheimer's disease, and infertility. Unfortunately, these chemicals are inadequately regulated.

While all people are at risk, some are more vulnerable. Communities of color and low-income communities suffer disproportionately from toxic chemical pollution caused by current industrial activity, "legacy chemicals" that are no longer in production but remain in communities where they were one produced or disposed. Expectant mothers and children are also particularly vulnerable toxic chemical exposure. Workers in the chemical industry can also suffer from toxic exposures in the workplace.

Toxic chemicals are also finding their way in many of God's creatures such as birds, fish, and even household pets. These chemicals are linked to serious health problems such as increased cancer, thyroid disease, and infertility.

Our nation's toxic chemical policy, the Toxic Substances Control Act, which should protect us from these exposures, has failed to protect the whole web of Creation, including the human community. The U.S. Government Accountability Office found that only 200 of the more than 82,000 registered industrial chemicals have been fully tested for safety and in fact 62,000 were grandfathered into the law in 1976 with no testing.

As state-level faith-based organizations we are committed to a vision of healthy communities, children, and Creation. Reforming our nation's chemical policy is a critical step in achieving this promise. Many of us are working to eliminate or restrict the use of toxic chemicals on the state level but we call on you to urgently enact comprehensive federal policy to protect our children and vulnerable populations. By making sure all chemicals are safe for kids and that legacy chemicals are removed from low-income communities and communities of color we can guarantee a bright future for all God's children and the whole of Creation.

Signed,

Arizona Ecumenical Council
California Council of Churches Impact
Center for the Celebration of Creation (Pennsylvania)
Church World Service New England Regional Office (including Northern New York)
Colorado Council of Churches
Connecticut Conference United Church of Christ
Connecticut Episcopal Diocese
Church Women United of Connecticut
Dae Yen Sa International Buddhist Temple and Meditation Center (Connecticut)
Delaware Ecumenical Council on Children and Families
Earth Ministry (Washington)
Eco-Justice Ministries (Colorado)
Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon
Interfaith Network for Earth Concerns
GreenFaith (New Jersey and National)
Interchurch Ministries of Nebraska
Interreligious Eco-Justice Network (Connecticut)
Kentucky Council of Churches
Maine Council of Churches
Massachusetts Council of Churches
Minnesota Council of Churches
New Mexico Council of Churches
Pennsylvania Council of Churches
Rhode Island State Council of Churches
Roman Catholic Diocese of Portland, Maine
Texas Impact
Vermont Ecumenical Council and Bible Society
Voices for Earth Justice (Michigan)
Washington Association of Churches
Wyoming Association of Churches