

Religious Leaders' Statement on Chemical Policy Reform

As a community of Christians, we bear witness to a God who is the source of life for all Creation and who called the land, waters, air, plants, creatures, and human beings "good" (Genesis 1). We live in a covenant with God who has entrusted us to steward and care for every living creature (Genesis 9:8-10). We give thanks for Christ Jesus who came that we might have life and have it abundantly (John 10:10). We also understand our responsibility to reverently care for human bodies as temples of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19-20). In addition, we are called to care for the "least of these," the most vulnerable (Matthew 25:40-45).

As religious leaders and clergy, we have a ministry of presence and listening. We conduct pastoral hospital visits for families with children in chemotherapy. We listen to the hidden anguished sobs of the couples who suffer from infertility and reproductive loss. We counsel new parents when they come to grips with birth defects. We advocate for youth with learning and developmental disabilities to be fully included in the life of the community. We remind children to bring their asthma inhalers with them to church and school. We help families adjust as aging parents and grandparents cope with Parkinson's and Alzheimer's diseases. We have been present and we have listened for years as incidents of childhood cancers, miscarriages, birth defects, developmental disabilities, asthma, and Parkinson's and Alzheimer's diseases have increased. We listen with heavy hearts, knowing that these conditions are linked to exposures to toxic chemicals.

The toxic trespass on our communities and all of God's Creation must end. Therefore, as Congress considers national chemical policy reform, we call on our representatives to protect God's people and God's creatures from harmful toxic chemicals by testing current chemicals as well as new chemicals before they enter the marketplace. We ask policymakers to eliminate or reduce toxic chemical exposure to vulnerable populations such as children, women, the elderly, and communities of color and to invest in research to find safer alternatives.

By committing ourselves to these principles we can work to heal our broken relationships with Creation and with each other, strengthening and renewing the entire body of Christ.

With Faith in a Healthier Future,

Title (Rev. Bishop, Parish Nurse, etc.) _____

Name _____

Congregation/Organatization* _____

***For identification purposes only.**

City _____ **State** _____ **Zip** _____

For delivery to Congress on July 22, 2011. Please return to EMO's Interfaith Network for Earth Concerns by July 15, 2011 by fax at 503-223-7007 or by mail to 0245 SW Bancroft, Suite B, Portland, OR 97239