



Mercy Justice



Responding to Climate Change through a Mercy Lens

The Sisters of Mercy participate in DC-based interfaith coalitions concerned about climate change, environmental degradation and the harms of mining, oil and gas drilling and other extractive industries. We also are active with the US-focused [Catholic Climate Covenant](#) and [the Laudato Si Movement](#), formerly known as the Global Catholic Climate Movement.

Climate change as a priority for the Sisters of Mercy

The Sisters of Mercy have committed to reducing our greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2045. We also have joined the global Catholic Church in a [7-year process toward greater environmental sustainability](#) rooted in Pope Francis' call to us to respond to both the cry of the Earth and the cry of the poor.

In addition to ministering to persons who are poor and developing environmentally sustainable internal processes and policies for our institutions, we are committed to speaking out on public policies at the local, state and national levels.

We consider climate policies from these core principles:

- Center communities that are most harmed by climate change and by the extraction of coal, gas, oil and other resources that contributes to a warming planet
- Ensure that human rights and integrity of ecosystems are respected in proposed solutions
- Address the root causes of the climate crisis and the intersections with other key concerns, such as racial justice, nonviolence, immigration and the right to clean water
- Recognize that technological fixes alone will not solve the climate crisis; we need to reduce absolute emissions and keep fossil fuels in the ground

Legislative Priorities

These principles lead us to support:

- \$555 billion in investments in clean energy, in climate resilience, and in assisting fossil fuel-dependent communities with diversifying their economies. This funding

was part of what was known as the Build Back Better Act, and we are now seeking another legislative vehicle for it.

- the [FOREST Act](#) (S.2950), which would ban imports into the US of goods sourced through illegal deforestation. This is an important first step to meeting the commitment to halt worldwide deforestation that came out of the international climate talks in Glasgow. We hear from our partners in the Amazon rainforest of South America that deforestation, in addition to being a driver of climate change, is also destroying their communities through violence and degradation of their land and water.
- A reversal of a provision of the 2017 tax legislation that permitted oil and gas leases in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, in solidarity with the Gwich'in people
- Research into and development of alternatives to increased mining to supply the metals and minerals required for the transition to a clean energy economy. This transition must be accomplished while minimizing as much as possible harms to ecosystems and human communities. We see this tension with opposition to copper mining on land sacred to the Apache people in Arizona and to lithium mining in Nevada by the Fort McDermitt Paiute and Shoshone Tribe.
- A strong [EPA rule](#) that would reduce methane emissions from oil and gas operations
- [Environmental Justice for All Act](#), to ensure key measures are in place to protect communities from pollution and other harms of further fossil fuel extraction and also from mining required for the clean energy transition.