



Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

Thank you for answering the call to join the Encounter for Our Common Home. You are joining over 750 people from 48 states, sponsored by 11 Catholic organizations, seeking to change the direction of the climate crisis, by asking your Senators to support and pass the most meaningful climate legislation in a generation.

The evidence of the epic scale of the climate crisis - the science, impacts, sufferings, and predictions - only grows. Yet decades of tireless efforts from a vast array of reasons and approaches to persuade Congress to pass legislation responsive to the evidence, have not yet succeeded. And so we ask you now, to encounter your Senators from the foundation of our Catholic faith, with grace and with confidence in our love of God the Creator and our neighbors. Jesus' example of love, humility, and redemption has always been, and still is, the timeless solution to downward spirals - the love that dispels hate, the light that dispels darkness. As we move forward together, may the Holy Spirit be with us, and [St. Francis' peace prayer](#) resonates in our hearts and minds.

What are we advocating for?

We are asking the Senate to pass [climate provisions](#) that the House of Representatives passed last November within a larger package. The provisions, worth \$555b, include among other things: tax incentives to spur the generation of renewable energy; production and use of electric vehicles; modernization of the electric grid; climate-friendly conservation and agricultural programs; methane leak reduction; and programs to help low income and minority communities build resilience to climate impacts and pollution. Together they would significantly reduce national greenhouse gas emissions on a scale never before seen from Congressional action.

Russia's invasion of Ukraine, financed by profits from oil and gas production, tragically reminds us that our long-term future, if it is to be a thriving and peaceful one, cannot include dependence on fossil fuels. Senate passage of these climate provisions can pivot us decisively in this direction, for the good of all, and our common home.

How is our advocacy Encounter distinctive?

At this time, all Democrats except Sen. Manchin, and no Republicans support these provisions. Despite the partisan divide, our encounter "is not about economic theory or political platforms, nor about partisan advantage or interest group pressures. It is about the future of God's creation and the one human family," echoing USCCB's [plea](#) for dialogue, prudence and the common good on climate change.

We ask that you engage your Senators with the presumption that they know the climate science, the existential threat of climate change, the need for climate solutions, and the import of this legislation. This can allow the conversation to move quickly through shared understandings, and into a spirit of encounter. During my years of meetings with Congressional offices, legislators



and staff from *both* parties have told me they recognize the gravity of the crisis. Legislators have mentioned the prospect of an imminent “jailbreak” when this shared private understanding will turn into public bipartisan action. Today, we ask you to offer your Senators moral support to free themselves or their peers from this jail, by supporting these provisions.

Second, we ask that you *encounter* your Senators and staff in the spirit of Christian fellowship, recognizing that we are made in God’s image and likeness, hoping we will join together to fulfill the Greatest commandment to love the Creator and our neighbors as ourselves. In this hope of fellowship in this encounter, we strive to imitate Jesus, who is meek and humble of heart and merciful, and ever open to the possibility of redemption. To foster this spirit, you may want to ask them to consider the following:

True statecraft is manifest when, in difficult times, we uphold high principles and think of the long-term common good. Pope Francis, [*Laudato Si'*](#) 178

What kind of world do we want to leave to those who come after us, to children who are now growing up? Pope Francis, [*Laudato Si'*](#) 160

You can ask them to discern this legislation solely in their relationship with the Creator, as if they are sitting in the pew of a quiet church or their place of worship – or looking out of a window, at the children playing outside, or a mother with child sitting on a park bench.

What if your Senator or staffer rejects the climate reality and/or the provisions?

Then your encounter will be more as a public witness. The request that they consider their legacy and relationship to the Creator in light of the climate reality, suffices. Not all people will be persuaded, but our Catholic faith calls us to witness, and the Beatitudes tell us that if we are rejected in Jesus’ name, we have been blessed. If they question the validity of the legislative package, ask them what comes even close to addressing the climate reality we share.

Large majorities of young people are deeply concerned about their future because of climate change, and feel government leaders are not doing enough. ([study](#)) You can tell them that their support would bring profound hope across entire generations. You are not asked to be a policy expert, but to share your faith and story, and to be ever open to the possibility of conversion.

What if your Senator already supports the legislation?

Our faith filled message helps them to understand and message about the climate crisis in this way as well. For they share with us the frustration of the ever widening gulf between the climate reality and inaction, between rational thought and reasoned action, and getting ever closer to potential irreversible climate impact. These circumstances are moving us all to be more prophetic and heart-filled in our pleas - one which may not often be heard in the halls of the Senate. Senators sharing our sentiments might then carry this call more often to their fellow Senators, constituents, and adversaries.



Carrying forth the Encounter

We ask that you seek to build a relationship with the Senator or staffer beyond this first encounter. The Senate will be continuing their deliberations on this legislation into the fall. Your continued engagement will be key to their discernment and the continued possibility of support.

We pray that we lead now and into the future, from the strength of our Catholic faith, in encounters with our Senators and their staff in a spirit of Christian love and fellowship. Our Catholic faith calls us to be people of hope, striving always to imitate Christ. In doing so, we are asked to be not afraid of scorn, rebuke, and rejection. We are asked to forgive, to love our brothers and sisters, neighbors, and our enemies/adversaries, and believe that all can be redeemed. And we are to hope and believe despite all odds, because for God, all things are possible.

Thank you for your care for our common home, and our neighbors, for the greater glory of God. May the Lord bless and keep you.

