

March 21, 2024

Dear Legislators:

As religious organizations that hold all of God's creation as sacred, we urge Congress to pass the FOREST Act of 2023 (S.3371/ H.R. 6515) introduced by Sen. Brian Schatz and Sen. Mike Braun and Rep. Earl Blumenauer and Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick. This bill, designed to stem illegal deforestation through trade, is a critical step in addressing climate change and biodiversity loss while promoting good governance and leveling the playing field for responsible businesses at home and abroad.

We also support this bill out of our solidarity with Indigenous peoples around the world, including in the Amazon region of South America, who have been protecting critical forest habitats for millennia. We see the FOREST Act as one mechanism for weakening the link between illegal deforestation and violent land invasions that lead to food insecurity, loss of livelihoods and even forced displacement.

In our role as consumers, we want to make sure that the products we find on store shelves are sourced ethically and sustainably. This is especially true for beef, soy, cocoa and palm oil, which are prioritized in the FOREST Act because they are too often produced on land deforested illegally under the laws of the producing countries.

We expect the United States to be a leader in setting high standards for trade and finance that promote good governance, protect vulnerable communities around the world, and maintain the integrity of critical forested ecosystems.

Please sign on as a co-sponsor of the FOREST Act.

Sincerely,

The following international, national, regional, state and local groups

International and National

Adrian Dominican Sisters
Alliance of Baptists
Augustinian Province of St. Thomas of Villanova
Aytzim: Ecological Judaism
Clarentian Team at the United Nations
Catholic Climate Covenant
Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life
Conventual Franciscan Friars - OLA Province
Creation Justice Ministries
Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul USA
Dominican Sisters of Sinsinawa

Dominican Sisters of Sparkill
Ecumenical Advocacy Network on the Philippines
Franciscan Action Network
Franciscan Sisters of the Sacred Heart
Grey Nuns of the Sacred Heart
Higher Ground Initiative
Holy Spirit Missionary Sisters, USA-JPIC
Interfaith Power & Light
Jesuit Conference Office of Justice and Ecology
Ladysmith Servite Sisters
Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns
Medical Mission Sisters, Justice Office
National Religious Partnership for the Environment
NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice
Office of Peace, Justice and Ecological Integrity, Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth
Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters
Passionist Solidarity Network
Pax Christi USA
Presbyterian Church (USA) Office of Public Witness
Presbyterian Hunger Program
Rabbinical Assembly
School Sisters of Notre Dame – Atlantic-Midwest Province
School Sisters of Notre Dame – Central Pacific Province
Servants of Mary, US/Jamaica/Canada Community Council
Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati
Sisters of Charity of Nazareth Congregational Leadership
Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word, Houston, TX
Sisters of Mary Reparatrix
Sisters of Mercy of the Americas Justice Team
Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary of the Woods
Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi
Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia
Sisters of St. Francis of the Providence of God
Sisters of St. Francis, Rochester, MN
Sisters of St. Francis, Sylvania
Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, Albany Province
Sisters, Servants of IHM, Scranton, PA
The Aquarian Minyan
The Episcopal Church
United Church of Christ
Ursuline Sisters of Louisville
U.S. Federation of the Sisters of St. Joseph
Wheaton Franciscan Sisters Office of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation

Regional (multiple states)

Franciscan Sisters of Our Lady of Perpetual Help
Holy Name Province, Sisters of St. Francis of Penance and Christian Charity

Interfaith Power & Light of New Mexico and El Paso
Sisters of the Humility of Mary
Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur – Ohio Province
Sisters of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary
Sisters of St. Francis, Odenburg, IN
Sisters of St. Benedict

State-wide

Dominican Sisters – Grand Rapids, MI
Franciscan Peace Center, Clinton, Iowa
IHM EarthCARE, PA
JCAN MA (Jewish Climate Action Network MA)
Kentucky Interfaith Power & Light
Leadership Team of the Dominican Sisters and Associates of Racine, WI
Minnesota Interfaith Power & Light
PA Jewish Earth Alliance
Sisters of Saint Joseph of Chestnut Hill, PA

Local

Bronx Jews for Climate Action
CAST – Jewish Floridians for Climate Solutions
Catholic Response to Climate Change – Knoxville
Dominican Sisters of Houston
Environmental Justice Ministry of First Unitarian, Rochester, NY
First Congregational United Church of Christ Albuquerque
First Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbus, OH
Franciscan Family of Greensboro, NC
Franciscan Justice Circle-MidHudson Valley, NY
Franciscan Justice Circle of Richmond, VA
Holy Name of Jesus Laudato Si Circle, Raleigh, NC
Jewish Federation of Greater Portland, OR
Justice Committee, Presbytery of NYC, Presbyterian Church (USA)
MW Green Group, Oregon
One for Peace, Guthrie, MN
Saint Lucy's Church, Newark, NJ
Second Presbyterian Church, New York
St. Bartholomew Care for Our Common Home Ministry, Columbus, Indiana
St. Joseph Parish, Jasper, Indiana
St. Joseph Catholic Church (Norman, OK) Peace and Justice - Creation Care Team
UnitarianUniversalist Fellowship of Hidalgo County, Texas