

July 27, 2015

His Holiness Pope Francis
Apostolic Palace
Vatican City

Your Holiness:

As national religious institutions and faith leaders in the United States, we write to enthusiastically welcome you to our country and its capital. Our public policy advocacy offices in Washington work across denominations and faiths to protect the needs of those marginalized by what is all too often an economy of exclusion.

Since the time of the U.S. civil rights movement in the 1960s, many of us have collaborated in Washington to promote U.S. federal policies rooted in the values that all of our faiths share. Our representatives in Washington meet daily with U.S. policy makers in Congress and the White House to advocate for a more inclusive society and a more just, peaceful and ecologically sustainable world. We work together on messaging and strategy, engage our faith-based constituencies across the country, hold interfaith prayer vigils, rallies and processions, and have proposed a Faithful Budget for our nation's spending.

Our efforts have been renewed by your clarity of vision and your bold statement of the truth of the needs of our time. We know that we all need to be called to a change of heart and we are so grateful for your raising up that call.

We eagerly anticipate your September visit to our nation's capital and your address to our national Congress. As people of faith we look forward to your message and are eager to share it with the members of our various faiths and denominations. Our nation needs to hear your words of hope and challenge.

Thank you for your willingness to come to us and to lift up your voice for those who are marginalized, peace and the needs of Earth.

Sincerely,

Paula Clayton Dempsey
Director for Partnership Relations
Alliance of Baptists

Ruth Messinger
President
American Jewish World Service

Archbishop Vicken Aykazian
Legate
Armenian Orthodox Church

Rev. David Beckmann
President
Bread for the World

Maria Santelli
Executive Director
The Center on Conscience & War

Dr. Sharon E. Watkins
General Minister and President
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada

Peter Vander Meulen
Coordinator, Office of Social Justice
Christian Reformed Church in North America

Stanley J. Noffsinger
General Secretary
Church of the Brethren

Rev. John L. McCullough
President and CEO
Church World Service

Very Rev. Jim Greenfield, OSFS
President
Conference of Major Superiors of Men

Rev. Stacy Martin
Director of Advocacy
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Rev. Jennifer Butler
CEO
Faith in Public Life

Sr. Margaret Magee, OSF
President
Franciscan Action Network

Diane Randall
Executive Secretary
Friends Committee on National Legislation

Dr. Sayyid M. Syeed
National Director
Islamic Society of North America

Rev. William Kelley, SJ
Secretary for Social and International Ministries
Jesuit Conference of Canada and the United States

Eric LeCompte
Executive Director
Jubilee USA Network

Sr. Joan Marie Steadman, CSC
Executive Director
Leadership Conference of Women Religious

Charlotte Harberaecker
President & CEO
Lutheran Services in America

Sam Stanton
Executive Director
Maryknoll Lay Missioners

Sr. Antoinette Guntzler
President
Maryknoll Sisters

Susan Thompson
Director
Medical Mission Sisters Alliance for Justice

Rev. Timothy Mulroy, SSC
U.S. Regional Director
Missionary Society of St. Columban

James Winkler
General Secretary and President
National Council of Churches, USA

Sr. Simone Campbell, SSS
Executive Director
NETWORK, A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby

Sr. Patricia Chappell
Executive Director
Pax Christi USA

Marie Dennis
Co-President
Pax Christi International

Rev. Grady Parsons
Stated Clerk of the General Assembly
Presbyterian Church (USA)

Dr. James C. Perkins, President
Dr. Tyrone Pitts, Ecumenical Officer
Progressive National Baptist Convention

Rabbi Jonah Dov Pesner
Director, ***Religious Action Center of Reform
Judaism***, and Senior Vice President, ***Union for
Reform Judaism***

Sister Patricia McDermott, RSM
President
Sisters of Mercy of the Americas

Sr. Ellen Kelly, RGS
Congregational Leader Elect
***Sisters of Our Lady of Charity of the Good
Shepherd***

The Rev. Peter Morales
President
Unitarian Universalist Association

Rev. Dr. John Dorhauer
General Minister and President
United Church of Christ

Rev. Dr. Susan Henry Crowe
General Secretary, General Board of Church and
Society
United Methodist Church