

# Climate Justice

## ISSUE BACKGROUND

Climate justice is a movement to acknowledge that one of the most pressing issues facing humanity today is the climate crisis. Global temperatures are rising, causing a cascade of impacts on ecosystems.

But climate change isn't just a global concern. Our region has experienced unprecedented patterns of consecutive warm summers in the past decade; hot, dry summers exacerbate forest fires, dangerous storms, heat-related deaths and drought. Disasters impact low-income families most directly.

This crisis has ramifications across borders; it is a justice issue as much as an environmental one, because the people facing the burden of coping with it are those who are both least responsible and least equipped to face its effects. The climate crisis exposes our world's existing social injustices in need of transformation.

## WHY IT MATTERS

### to people of faith

Religious traditions worldwide encourage a loving relationship with the Earth. In his groundbreaking encyclical, *Laudato Si*, Pope Francis reminded followers of the centrality of creation care to the life of faith: "Living our vocation to be protectors of God's handiwork is essential to a life of virtue; it is not an optional or a secondary aspect of our Christian experience."

## CREATION CARE for Oregon now

The signature climate justice bill coming before the Oregon Legislature this Session is the Clean Energy Jobs Bill. The core principle of the bill is to cap the amount of climate pollution from the largest emitters, charge emitters for pollution over the set limits, and invest the funds in jobs that are building our sustainable, clean energy future economy, like transportation upgrades, energy efficiency in homes and affordable solar power. Over 48,000 Oregonians already work in clean energy jobs, and this bill will boost investment in these jobs for people across skill sets and professional training. Oregon's governor and leaders in both chambers of the State Legislature have supported this effort, so we are hopeful we can see this goal reached.

### *What you can do:*

- Call (800) 332-2313 to tell your state senator and representative you support the Clean Energy Jobs Bill. - Learn about the bill with Renew Oregon, one of EMO's partners.

## RAISE YOUR VOICE

Join the Climate Action rally and meetings with legislators on February 11. Meet with your state senator and representative in a supportive group to tell them you support clean energy jobs! Join us at noon at the Capitol Steps and register at [emoregon.org/events](http://emoregon.org/events).

## PRAYER for creation care (Source: Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon)

Loving Creator;

You created the Earth, you created us, and you called it good. From mud and clay, you formed us, eternally linked to our earth. You have surrounded us with an abundance of blessing. You have embedded us within an interdependent web of diverse creatures, our planetary family, in which we belong and have a home. You have called us to be creators like you.

Yet, too often we have played the role of dominion, and perverted life-giving power into the power of destruction. Over and over, you have woken us from our numbness and shaken us from our apathy. Through the calls of scientists, the cries of displaced persons, and the heartache in wake of unnatural disasters, we have seen the signs but refused to read what they tell us.

And yet, you have not turned your back on us. You have not abandoned us or this world. You still love us and still call us to our better selves. You still call us good.

Strengthen us for the work ahead, for the suffering that may still befall us, for the profound shifting in values we must undertake to address the climate crisis. Ground us in the truth of our existence, as beings of earth, dust and ash, with the blessing of one chance to call your world our home.

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### MORAL URGENCY

“The task before us is morally urgent: we are called to live into a prophetic vision that protects God’s Creation and creates healthy, thriving communities. We call on Oregon’s elected officials to take immediate action to protect the air we breathe and the water we drink. With the Clean Energy Jobs bill, we will safeguard the climate for future generations while making sure the transition to clean energy is a smooth one, especially for vulnerable Oregonians.”

—Jan Elfers, EMO President

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### ADVOCACY TIP

It’s just as important to thank legislators for taking action you support, as urging them to change their positions. If your legislator tends to support bills you support, you can still write to encourage them and thank them for representing you well.

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### CLIMATE AS COMMON GOOD

Pope Francis offers a challenge to not only religious followers, but also civic leaders, to work together for policy changes that address the climate crisis and achieve what no one can do alone:

“There is an urgent need to develop policies so that, in the next few years, the emission of carbon dioxide and other highly polluting gases can be drastically reduced, for example, substituting for fossil fuels and developing sources of renewable energy... International negotiations cannot make significant progress due to positions taken by countries which place their national interests above the global common good. Those who will have to suffer the consequences of what we are trying to hide will not forget this failure of conscience and responsibility.”

Religious communities have a role to play. Scientists can explain natural phenomena or develop technological advances, but it is people of faith whose expertise is in identifying a moral vision for our future.

*Learn more and connect at [emoregon.org](http://emoregon.org) or (503) 221-1054*