

Feb. 5, 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 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, 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  
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  
Jewish Federation of Greater Portland, OR  
Justice Committee, Presbytery of NYC, Presbyterian Church (USA)  
MW Green Group, Oregon  
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