

May 15, 2018

Dear Member of Congress:

We write to call your attention to the Principles for a Faithful Farm Bill, signed by over 50 national faith-based organizations, calling for a Farm Bill that protects and strengthens nutrition assistance programs in the U.S. We are concerned about harmful proposals in the Farm Bill that would restrict eligibility for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) by imposing arbitrary work requirements upon people who simply need help putting food on the table. These policies will have real impacts on real people, and fail to take into account the realities of their situation.

Many of our organizations, congregations, and leaders work to feed, clothe, house, and serve our friends and neighbors who are struggling, but we know that we cannot do this work alone. More than 40 million American men, women, and children struggle to put food on the table on a regular basis. While charitable organizations play a vital role in addressing hunger, we know that the overwhelming majority of food assistance in this country has historically come from—and must continue to come from—federal programs.

Sacred texts and proud traditions compel us to honor the dignity of every person, especially those who are struggling. No matter a person's circumstance, no one deserves to be hungry.

We call on Congress to ensure that the Farm Bill lives up to its historical promise and protects SNAP and the millions of Americans who must rely on it.

Signed,

Adorers of the Blood of Christ/US Region
Association of Rabbis and Cantors
Avodah
Aytzim: Ecological Judaism
Bread for the World
Church World Service
Central Conference of American Rabbis
Christian Reformed Church; Office of Social Justice
Columban Center for Advocacy and Outreach
Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, US Provinces
Disciples Center for Public Witness (Disciples of Christ)
Ecumenical Poverty Initiative
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Faith in Public Life
Franciscan Action Network
Franciscan Sisters of the Atonement
Franciscan Sisters of the Poor, US Area
Friends Committee on National Legislation
Global Faith and Justice Program
Hadassah, The Women's Zionist Organization of America, Inc.
Hazon
Holy Spirit Missionary Sisters, USA-JPIC
Intercommunity Peace & Justice Center
The Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility

Interfaith Worker Justice
Islamic Relief USA
Islamic Society of North America
Jewish Council for Public Affairs
The Jewish Federations of North America
Justice, Peace, Integrity of Creation Office of Sisters of St. Agnes
Leadership Conference of Women Religious
Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns
MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger
Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Washington Office
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd
National Council of Jewish Women
The Network of Jewish Human Service Agencies
NETWORK, A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby
Northwest Coalition for Responsible Investment
Office of Peace, Justice, and Ecological Integrity, Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth
Office of Justice and Ecology; Jesuit Conference of Canada and the United States
Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters
Poligon Education Fund
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
Rabbinical Assembly
Reconstructing Judaism
Reconstructionist Rabbinical Assembly
Society of St. Vincent de Paul
The Stuart Center for Mission, Educational Leadership and Technology
The Three Treasures Zen Community
T'ruah: The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights
Union for Reform Judaism
United Church of Christ, Justice and Local Church Ministries
The United Methodist Church - General Board of Church and Society
Uri L'Tzedek
Ursuline Sisters of Mount Saint Joseph
Women of Reform Judaism



Principles for a Faithful Farm Bill
March 2018

From God's initial command to care for creation to the prophets' call for justice among governments and nations, people of faith in every age are called together to work for the common good. Inspired by our faith traditions' commands to care for poor and vulnerable people, we join together to support policies that promote local food security in the U.S. and around the world, strengthen rural communities, and care for the land as God's creation.

Our nation's food and farm policies as embodied in the Farm Bill impact people and communities from rural America to developing countries. The Farm Bill's resources must be effectively targeted where need is greatest. Programs and policies that curb hunger and malnutrition, support vibrant agricultural economies in rural communities, and promote the sustainable use of natural resources must be prioritized as part of a comprehensive Farm Bill, with adequate funding to fully meet these diverse needs.

Together, we urge Congress to take the opportunity presented by the reauthorization of the Farm Bill to reduce hunger and poverty in the U.S. and around the world and encourage sustainable stewardship of our resources. To this end, we support the following principles for the Farm Bill:

Protect and strengthen programs that reduce hunger and improve nutrition in the United States.

Promote investments and policies that strengthen rural communities and combat rural poverty.

Provide a fair and effective farm safety net that allows farmers and producers in the U.S. and around the world to earn economically sustainable livelihoods.

Strengthen policies and programs that promote conservation and protect our natural resources from environmental degradation.

Protect the dignity, health, and safety of those responsible for working the land.

Promote research related to alternative, clean, and renewable forms of energy that do not negatively impact food prices or the environment.

Safeguard and improve international food aid in ways that encourage local food security and improve the nutritional quality of food aid.