



OFFICE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

J. HERBERT NELSON, II
STATED CLERK OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

November 6, 2019

The Honorable Michael R. Pompeo
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Pompeo:

I write this letter to express my concern that the United States of America has begun the formal process of withdrawing from the Paris Climate Agreement. The Paris Climate Agreement, joined by nearly every country on earth, serves as a model for cutting the damaging effects of greenhouse gasses and climate change the world over. The United States, recognizing our national sin to the world as the second largest contributor to climate change, should be a leader, not a dissident in this regard.

Presbyterians have long understood our faith to include care for God's creation. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)'s General Assemblies have recognized and asked our members to do the following:

- Express profound concern about the destructive effects of climate change on all God's creation, including a disproportionate impact on those living in poverty and in the least developed countries, the elderly and children, and those least responsible for the emissions of greenhouse gases.
- Recognize the Gospel's call and the moral mandate for humanity to shift to a sustainable energy regime in ways that are both just and compassionate. This mandate compels us to action as a denomination to implement strategies and actions that directly engage climate change and that offer a realistic prospect of changing the behaviors that are at the root of the issue.
- Work with citizens, voters, legislators, other decision-makers, and other organizations that have parallel goals to bring into effect national and international policies that create a consistent, rational, and escalating price for emissions of CO₂ and other greenhouse gases, which will reduce consumption and support investment in sustainable alternative energy sources.
- Protect the poor by advocating to ensure that the policy steps that implement emissions pricing also implement policies sufficient to offset the regressive nature of the pricing mechanism, such as per capita rebates of all taxes or fees collected through the pricing mechanism.

I fear that failure to join the world as leaders and members of one global family, the United States government will not only harm God's creation now, but for generations to come. I ask for you to reconsider the decision to remove the United States of America from an agreement that works to protect future generations.

We urge the United States to work together with other member states and to rejoin the Paris Climate Agreement of which the United States is but one member. In Christian scripture, we have an image of membership in a single organization, as we are joined as members of the body of Christ (Romans 12:5). We pray that the United States will work towards reforms that make for a safer and sustainable environment and to protect citizens of the world, now and in the future.

In the faith that we share,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "J. Herbert Nelson, II". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and a prominent "N".

The Reverend Dr. J. Herbert Nelson, II
Stated Clerk of the General Assembly
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)