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Dear Member of Congress:

On behalf of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, we welcome House consideration of *H.R. 2454, the American Clean Energy and Security Act of 2009*, and the leadership of Chairmen Waxman and Markey in moving this legislation forward. Addressing global climate change is both urgent and necessary. House consideration of this groundbreaking legislation begins a serious and overdue effort to face up to moral and environmental challenges and represents an important beginning. We are encouraged by provisions in the legislation that seek to protect the poor and vulnerable at home and abroad. However, we are very concerned about the inadequate funding for assisting the poorest people and countries on earth through international adaptation efforts.

For the United States Catholic bishops and for many others in the faith community, we are called to care for creation and for "the least of these." A fundamental moral measure of climate change legislation is how it affects the poor in our own country and around the world. As articulated in the bishops' statement, *Global Climate Change: A Plea for Dialogue, Prudence and the Common Good*, "Action to mitigate global climate change must be built upon a foundation of social and economic justice that does not put the poor at greater risk or place disproportionate and unfair burdens on developing nations."

We are generally supportive of the provisions within the legislation that help ensure that low-income individuals and families in the U.S. are not disproportionately affected by any potential rise in energy prices resulting from the legislation. We will continue to support efforts to strengthen these provisions and to ensure that vehicles for delivering these resources to those most in need are adequate and effective.

In addition, we support measures that encourage and help not-for-profit, community and faith-based institutions including houses of worship, many of whom provide essential assistance to the poor, to become more energy efficient.

We also support the mechanisms put in place to provide adaptation assistance for poor and vulnerable populations internationally. **However, we are deeply disappointed that the funding resources committed to international adaptation fall fundamentally short of what is needed initially and that additional increases in resources are pushed too far off into the future.** We understand that the current allocation reflects compromise and competing political priorities, but Congress cannot leave the most vulnerable people without adequate help needed to protect their lives and dignity. For us, this is not a marginal matter, but rather a matter of moral priority and policy.

We urge that as the legislation moves forward both in the House and in the Senate, the amount allocated to international adaptation be increased significantly at the outset and at a faster pace over time. These increases would help meet the initial needs of people living in poverty in the most vulnerable developing

nations. Expanded resources would also send a strong message of the U.S. commitment to securing a global treaty by providing a substantial down payment for international adaptation funding.

Catholic Relief Services is already experiencing the tragic consequences of climate change in the lives of people living in poverty. CRS, through its work in over 100 countries, is helping communities adapt to the consequences of climate change and mitigate its effects through health, agriculture, water, and emergency preparedness programs. Pope Benedict XVI in his 2008 World Youth Day address also drew attention to some of the dangers of climate change currently facing vulnerable nations, including “island nations whose very existence is threatened by rising water levels” and other “nations suffering the effects of devastating drought.”

As the legislative process moves forward, we look forward to working with Congress and the Administration to increase funding for international adaptation assistance and taking a major step toward caring for creation and protecting “the least of these.”

Sincerely yours,



Most Reverend Howard J. Hubbard  
Bishop of Albany  
Chairman,  
Committee on International Justice and Peace



Ken Hackett  
President  
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