



Statement from Dan Misleh
Executive Director
on Passage of America's Climate Security Act of 2007

On Wednesday, December 5, the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee passed America's Climate Security Act of 2007.

This bill represents a significant step forward on a path that will not only help reduce greenhouse gases—a goal that goes a long way to mitigating the impacts of climate change—but also will provide new and needed resources to assist low-income people at home and the poorest of our brothers and sisters abroad. The U.S. Catholic bishops and other members of the National Religious Partnership for the Environment will continue to work with Senators to improve these poverty provisions as the bill goes to the Senate floor in the coming months.

Over the course of the last few months, the Catholic bishops, diocesan social ministry staff, parishioners and other religious leaders worked against the odds to ensure that funding for adaptation measures for least developed countries to climate change by the was put back into the bill (it had been stripped between the introduction of the outline of the legislation and the introduction in a key subcommittee). Senator Warner of Virginia as well as EPW Chairman Barbara Boxer were key to this effort.

Important protections for low-income citizens in this country are also included in the bill but are not adequately funded or targeted to those most in need. The Catholic community will join forces with other faith communities to ensure that these provisions are strengthened.

As this process began, an early fear by the religious community was that this legislation would be a “win-win” for two broad groups: the business community would benefit from free allocations which they could trade and generate windfall profits for themselves and

their stockholders; environmental groups would benefit by proving to funders that they can deliver on a comprehensive climate change bill. Lost would be those without a voice or a lobby: the poor of this country and around the globe.

However, through the efforts of prominent Catholic leaders such as Bishop William Skylstad in his role as President of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and Bishop Thomas Wenski, chairman of the USCCB's Committee on International Policy, as well as the efforts of many diocesan and state Catholic conference directors, the poor were represented at the negotiating table and are now also in the "win" column.

In real terms, legislation is being shaped and written, not enacted. The outlook for actual passage of this bill is slim. However, the bishops believe that it is vitally important for these provisions to be in the legislation as this particular bill will be the basis for future policy efforts. In a real way, the framework for future legislation is being established now.

I urge you to continue to visit this website for updates as well as the [USCCB's website](#).

Here are some of the documentation outlining efforts by the U.S. bishops, other religious leaders:

- [Religious Leaders' Statements](#) on International Provisions to Senator Boxer
- Religious Leaders' Statement outlining basic [principles for climate change legislation](#)
- "[NRPE Fairness Agenda](#)" for climate Change policy by members of the National Religious Partnership for the Environment