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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6175

February 7, 2007

Dear Colleague:

There has been much discussion lately regarding evangelicals and their participation in the ongoing debate on climate change. Accordingly, I call your attention to the enclosed article from the February 2, 2006 edition of *The Washington Post*. The article refers to a January 2006 letter, also enclosed, from the Interfaith Stewardship Alliance (ISA) to the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE), signed by 22 prominent evangelical leaders.

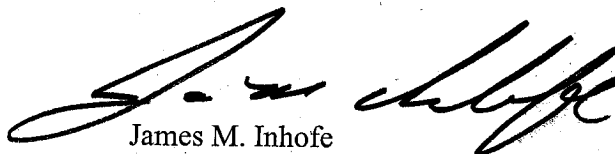
As *The Washington Post* states, "[t]he letter's signers amounted to a Who's Who of politically powerful evangelicals," including Chuck Colson, James Dobson, James Kennedy, and Richard Land. The letter firmly establishes the signatories' conviction that it is inappropriate for the NAE to take an official position on climate change: "We believe there should be room for Bible-believing evangelicals to disagree about the cause, severity and solutions to the global warming issue." As the letter's authors correctly point out, "[g]lobal warming is not a consensus issue."

Further, NAE's president, the Rev. Ted Haggard, clearly articulated his organization's position on this subject. On February 1, 2006, the Rev. Haggard said in a written statement that the NAE is "not considering a position on global warming. We are not advocating for specific legislation or government mandates." Contrary to previous assertions of a growing movement among evangelicals toward embracing a policy position on global warming, the NAE's latest communication shows that there is, in fact, no movement in that direction, prompting one evangelical environmentalist to call the statement "a retreat and a defeat."

ISA spokesman Dr. Kenneth Chilton states that "the degree to which global warming is caused by man and the extent of its impacts on mankind and the environment are far from 'settled'." I urge you to keep this fact in mind should the Senate again devote attention to legislative proposals requiring mandatory reductions of carbon dioxide emissions -- proposals that would inflict considerable damage to our nation's economy while providing no measurable environmental benefits. Tom Mullen, president of Cleveland Catholic Charities, testified before my Committee that the dramatic increases in energy prices resulting from carbon cap legislation would severely impact low-income families, especially poor children "as their moms are forced to make choices of whether to pay the rent or live in a shelter; pay the heating bill or see their child freeze; buy food or risk the availability of a hunger center."

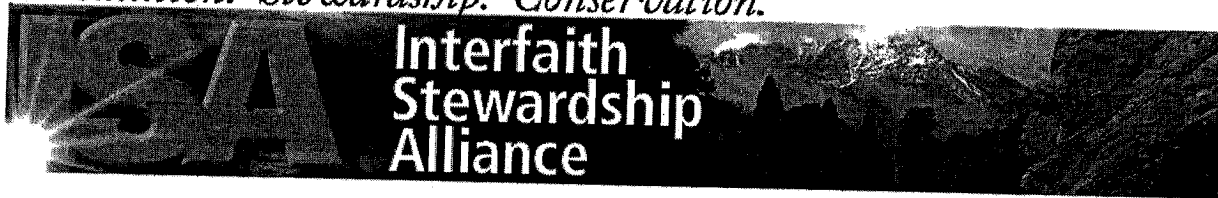
In the months ahead, we should focus our efforts on legislation that will ensure significant reductions of real air pollution while keeping America's economy strong, thus ensuring that the health and well-being of our constituents remain a top priority.

Sincerely,



James M. Inhofe
Chairman

Dominion. Stewardship. Conservation.



A Letter to the National Association of Evangelicals on the Issue of Global Warming

We have appreciated the bold stance that the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) has taken on controversial issues like embracing a culture of life, protecting traditional marriage and family, promoting abstinence as AIDS prevention, and many others.

We respectfully request, however, that the NAE not adopt any official position on the issue of global climate change. Global warming is not a consensus issue, and our love for the Creator and respect for His creation does not require us to take a position.

We are evangelicals and we care about God's creation. However, we believe there should be room for Bible-believing evangelicals to disagree about the cause, severity and solutions to the global warming issue.

Further, we signatories who are members of the NAE believe that if the NAE wishes to take an official position on global warming or any other issue, it should do so through its formal process within the general council. Individual NAE members or staff should not give the impression that they are speaking on behalf of the entire membership, so as not to usurp the credibility and good reputation of the NAE.

Evangelicals are to be first and foremost messengers of the good news of the gospel to a lost and dying world. We are to promote those things that please God and oppose those things in the world that clearly violate His righteous standard of conduct. We respectfully ask that the NAE carefully consider all policy issues in which it might engage in the light of promoting unity among the Christian community and glory to God.

With love and respect,

(Affiliations are provided for identification purposes only. Signatories are representing their own views, and not necessarily those of their churches or organizations.)

Charles W. Colson, Founder and Chairman
Prison Fellowship Ministries

Dr. James C. Dobson, Founder and Chairman
Focus on the Family

Dr. John C. Hagee, Founder and Senior Pastor
Cornerstone Church
San Antonio, Texas

Rev. Dr. D. James Kennedy, Senior Minister
Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church
Ft. Lauderdale, Florida

Dr. Richard Land, President
The Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission
Southern Baptist Convention

Dr. Richard Roberts, President
Oral Roberts University

Rev. Louis P. Sheldon, Chairman
Traditional Values Coalition

Donald E. Wildmon, Founder and Chairman
American Family Association

David Barton, Founder and President
Wallbuilders

Joel Belz, Founder
World Magazine

Dr. Richard B. Belzer
Faith Evangelical Presbyterian Church

Dr. E. Calvin Beisner, Associate Professor
Knox Theological Seminary

Rev. Jack Bradley
Emmanuel Orthodox Presbyterian Church
Colville, Washington

Dr. Kenneth Chilton
Chapel of the Lake, Lake Saint Louis, MO

Thomas Chilton
Associate Director of International Training
Awana Clubs International

Charles W. Jarvis, Chairman
USA Next

James Lafferty
Christian Seniors Association

Dr. Tracy Miller
Associate Professor of Economics
Grove City College

Dr. Joey Pipa, President
Greenville Theological Seminary

Dr. Timothy D. Terrell
Associate Professor of Economics
Wofford College

Rev. Ralph Weitz, Stewardship Pastor
Immanuel Bible Church, Springfield, VA

Alan Wisdom
Interim President
Institute on Religion and Democracy

The Washington Post

Evangelicals Will Not Take Stand on Global Warming

By Alan Cooperman
Washington Post Staff Writer
Thursday, February 2, 2006; A08

The National Association of Evangelicals said yesterday that it has been unable to reach a consensus on global climate change and will not take a stand on the issue, disappointing environmentalists who had hoped that evangelical Christians would prod the Bush administration to soften its position on global warming.

Over the past four years a growing number of evangelical groups have embraced environmental causes, urging Christians to engage in "Creation care" and campaigning against gas-guzzling SUVs with advertisements asking, "What would Jesus drive?"

In October 2004 the leadership of the NAE, which says it has 30 million members and is the nation's largest evangelical organization, declared that mankind has "a sacred responsibility to steward the Earth and not a license to abuse the creation of which we are a part." At about the same time, the umbrella group's president, the Rev. Ted Haggard of Colorado Springs, called the environment "a values issue."

But this fledgling movement -- dubbed the "greening of evangelicals" in a front-page Washington Post article a year ago -- has also met internal resistance. In a letter to Haggard last month, more than 20 evangelical leaders urged the NAE not to adopt "any official position" on global climate change because "Bible-believing evangelicals . . . disagree about the cause, severity and solutions to the global warming issue."

The letter's signers amounted to a Who's Who of politically powerful evangelicals, including Charles W. Colson, founder of Prison Fellowship Ministries; James C. Dobson, chairman of Focus on the Family; the Rev. D. James Kennedy of Coral Ridge Ministries; the Rev. Richard Land of the Southern Baptist Convention; Richard Roberts, president of Oral Roberts University; Donald E. Wildmon, chairman of the American Family Association; and the Rev. Louis P. Sheldon, chairman of the Traditional Values Coalition.

In a written statement yesterday, Haggard denied reports that the NAE had circulated a draft paper calling for the Bush administration to support mandatory limits on carbon dioxide emissions.

"Allow me to confirm at the outset that the NAE is not circulating any official document on the environment. We are not considering a position on global warming. We are not advocating for specific legislation or government mandates," Haggard said. His statement added that the NAE's executive committee recently passed a motion "recognizing the ongoing debate" on global warming and "the lack of consensus among the evangelical community on this issue."

Calvin DeWitt, a professor of environmental studies at the University of Wisconsin who is a leading evangelical supporter of environmental causes, called the statement "a retreat and a defeat."

"A year ago, it looked as though evangelicals would become a strong, collective voice for what we call 'Creation care' and others may call environmentalism," he said. "This will have negative consequences for the ability of evangelicals to influence the White House, unfortunately and sadly."

But E. Calvin Beisner, professor of social ethics at Knox Theological Seminary, a conservative Presbyterian school in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., applauded the NAE's non-position.

Beisner, who helped draft the letter to Haggard from evangelical leaders, said they had feared that the NAE was going "to assume as true certain things that we think are still debatable, such as that global warming is not only real but also almost certainly going to be catastrophically harmful; second, that it is being driven to a significant extent by human activity; and third, that some regime, some international treaty for mandatory reductions in CO2 emissions, could make a significant enough drop in global emissions to justify the costs to the human economy."