

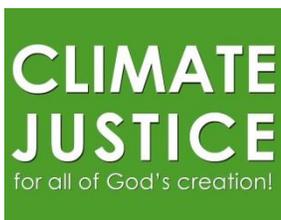


- + Continuing support for the EPA's proposed carbon rule + Humanitarian aid in Jerusalem
- + Preparing for the New York People's Climate March
- + Bristol Bay Advocacy + Efforts led by Lutheran advocacy offices throughout the country

Washington, D.C.

Stacy Martin, ELCA Advocacy Office

www.elca.org/advocacy



Continuing support for the EPA's proposed carbon rule

We're continuing to gather letters in support of the Environmental Protection Agency's proposed carbon rule for power plants, encouraging Lutherans who testified at hearings in late July and early August to turn their testimony into opinion pieces for local and regional newspapers, as well as developing a resource that can be used by congregations participating in "Gods Work. Our Hands." Sunday to advocate for clean air for all God's children.



Advocating for humanitarian aid in Jerusalem

Dr. Tawfiq Nasser, CEO of The Lutheran World Federation's (LWF) Augusta Victoria Hospital (AVH) in Jerusalem, visited Capitol Hill last month with advocates from ELCA Advocacy and [Peace Not Walls](#). The group urged members of Congress to release USAID humanitarian funding aimed at providing critical health care in the Holy Land. This funding will help save lives and ensure that there is no interruption in the AVH treatment of West Bank and Gaza cancer patients and others needing life-saving care. Learn more about AVH's relationship with USAID: [LWF annual report](#) (pages 16-17).

Peace Not Walls continues to advocate for funding AVH and other East Jerusalem hospitals. Visit the ELCA's [Action Alert Center](#) to learn more about the funding crisis and how to take action.



Preparing for the New York climate march

On Sept. 21, hundreds of thousands of people will march in New York City in support of a strong international climate treaty. The [People's Climate March](#) rallies around an upcoming international U.N. Climate Summit as world leaders come together to discuss a global pollution and climate change agreement. ELCA Advocacy has been engaged with Lutheran advocates, synods in the region, and partner coalitions to encourage and support participation from Lutherans and other people of faith. If you're planning to attend the March, please let us know by filling out [our form](#).



Bristol Bay Advocacy

Alaska Synod Bishop Shelley Wickstrom testified before the EPA last month about the impacts a massive proposed gold mine would have on salmon habitat in Bristol Bay, Alaska. The Bristol Bay salmon run supports one of the world's most valuable fisheries, supporting a \$1.5 billion annual economy and 14,000 jobs as well as a subsistence fishery for Alaska Natives and other residents of the region.

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California

Mark Carlson, Lutheran Office of Public Policy

www.loppca.org

Caring for creation: Under time pressure, the California Legislature compromised to place a \$7.5 billion water bond before voters, replacing an unpopular \$11 billion measure from a previous session. This proposition includes funds for investments in water efficiency, groundwater, water quality and recycling and advances the goals of the “human right to water” for disadvantaged communities. With a continuing drought emergency and a few dozen communities facing the prospect of losing their water supply, LOPP-CA is recommending a YES vote.



LOPP-CA Director Mark Carlson was one of 120 participants in a session on faith and science at the Ecological Society of America convention, which drew 4,000 people to Sacramento with a focus on climate change. Mark attended a dinner for about 36 people following the session, hosted by Catholic Bishop Jaime Soto and the Catholic Climate Change Network, and recruited a contract conservation lobbyist and a Mormon who heads the Interfaith Council of Greater Sacramento to attend. Mark also attended the launch of a solar energy partnership between the Sungevity corporation and Catholic Charities and the Diocese of Stockton.

Mark was among 800 who attended the Climate Adaption Conference in Sacramento, which included planners, public health and public safety leaders, local government representatives, and NGO's. Lutherans attending included Martha Harris, a certified planner and student at Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary, the senior policy director of the American Lung Association of California, and the emergency preparedness director for a county Department of Health and Human Services.

Colorado

Peter Severson, Lutheran Advocacy Ministry – Colorado

www.lam-co.org

Colorado voters are likely to see only four ballot measures this fall after a deal between Gov. John Hickenlooper, U.S. Rep. Jared Polis, and several state representatives averted the presence of up to four additional measures about oil and gas drilling. Instead, the governor has created an 18-member task force with the goal of developing legislative recommendations related to drilling and land-use conflicts. The ballot measures would have almost certainly provoked an expensive, divisive battle between industry boosters and anti-fracking coalitions, although dropping the measures has led grassroots environmental activists – many of whom spent months collecting signatures – to argue that the public is being prevented from weighing in on fracking. LAM-CO is co-sponsoring a voter information forum in October about the remaining ballot issues.

LAM-CO and the Rocky Mountain Synod continue to keep congregations and communities connected to the issue of unaccompanied migrant children. In collaboration with the synod SPPOs, Border Servant Corps and local activists, the synod newsletter has been featuring new stories every week of people who have encountered the realities of the detention and processing centers housing these children and other migrants. Recently, city and county of Denver applied for a grant from the HHS Office of Refugee Resettlement to house up to 60 children in a temporary shelter, with strong support from Mayor Michael Hancock, immigrant rights coalitions, and humanitarian relief groups.



Illinois

Jennifer DeLeon, Lutheran Advocacy – Illinois

www.lutheranadvocacy.org

Legislation to Stop Discrimination Against Pregnant Women in the Workplace was signed into law yesterday. Lutheran advocacy worked on this bill last session. HB 8 provides pregnant women with important worker protections, such as limits on heavy lifting and assistance in manual labor, access to places to sit, more frequent bathroom breaks, time off to recover from childbirth, and break space for breast-feeding.



ILLINOIS CAMPAIGN TO
PROTECT OUR CHILDREN & FAMILIES



Lutheran Advocacy II has joined the Illinois Campaign to Protect Our Children & Families and will participate in a press conference to publicly launch the campaign. This event is coordinated with a national day of action calling on President Obama to take immediate steps and provide administrative relief to hard-working immigrants living in the United States.

[Please sign NIJC petition asking the president to let lawyers in to represent refugee children.](#)

Minnesota

Tammy Walhof, Lutheran Coalition for Public Policy in Minnesota

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Legislative policy development – LCPPM is deeply involved with the Homes for All Coalition in investigating, researching, analyzing and debating affordable housing funding and policy options for introduction in the 2015 legislative session. We are engaged in a similar process with the Clean Energy and Jobs Campaign. This involves one to three meetings a week for each coalition, as well as individual meetings with some of the partners. A Minnesota Without Poverty (another organization) has just started its policy process.

Creation care/climate change education – LCPPM partnered with Citizen's Climate Lobby to sponsor an event featuring Sen. Rob Hogg of Iowa and recruited Christ the King Lutheran in Bloomington, Minn., as host (district of congressman Erik Paulsen). Sen. Hogg is the author of "America's Climate Century," a book that Bishop Ann Svennungsen previously distributed to leaders in the Minneapolis Area Synod. We were pleased to have 72 people attending, despite the beautiful August evening. Several additional people contacted LCPPM to indicate that they were interested but unable to attend. LCPPM has also been working with other partners to help re-establish Lutherans Restoring Creation in the Twin Cities metro area.

Communications/administration – LCPPM is in the process of converting its website to WordPress to rework and refresh both the look and the information. Facebook and Twitter accounts will be launched soon. Significant work was also done both to move LCPPM away from its out-dated computer servers and to improve the overall administrative functions and processes of the LCPPM office.



New Jersey

Sara Lilja, New Jersey

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This summer, after months of advocacy work Gov. Chris Christie signed into law two important pieces to legislation that will begin the reform of the criminal justice system in New Jersey: Bail Reform and the Opportunity to Compete. The Bail Reform measure will vastly improve New Jersey's bail system by (1) declaring non-monetary pretrial release the default option for the majority of defendants; (2) establishing a pretrial services agency in each county to supervise low-risk individuals who are released pending trial; (3) mandating the use of a validated risk assessment tool when evaluating individuals for release; and (4) permitting the absolute detention of truly dangerous individuals.

The Opportunity to Compete will improve the economic viability, health, and security of New Jersey communities and will assist people with criminal records reintegrate into the community, become productive members of the workforce, and provide for their families and themselves. Potential employers will not be able to ask an applicant about their criminal history during the initial employment application process. Later in the hiring process employers can inquire about the applicant's criminal history.

LOGM is very thankful for the passage of our Criminal Justice Reform Social Statement. The reasoning laid out in this document helped shape the discussion while the bills were being crafted in the Legislature as well as in church basements as grassroots movements helped move this legislation into law. Building upon this success, we will begin work on parole reform in New Jersey next week.

New Mexico

Ruth Hoffman, Lutheran Advocacy Ministry – New Mexico

www.lam-nm.org

Immigration: LAM-NM has been supporting the work of the New Mexico Faith Coalition for Immigrant Justice to bring attention to the situation at the federal facility in Artesia, N.M., where hundreds of mothers and children fleeing Central America are being detained. We are urging the end to fast-track deportations, access to bond so these families have a better chance of obtaining legal representation, and that these families' pleas for refuge be given due process under the Constitution.

Ruth Hoffman, LAM-NM director, traveled to southern New Mexico to learn more about the refugee situation with the New Mexico Conference of Churches (NMCC) board of directors. They heard about Project Oak Tree, which was implemented by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Las Cruces in late July to host Central American families and help them join up with family members here throughout the United States. Led by Bishop Oscar Cantu, the NMCC group also traveled to El Paso to hear about the work of Annunciation House which is also working to help immigrant families from Central America and Mexico.



Ruben Garcia with Annunciation House speaks to the NMCC group.

Pennsylvania

Amy Reumann, Lutheran Advocacy Ministry in Pennsylvania www.lutheranadvocacypa.org

With the Legislature in recess, August was a month for meeting with legislative staff and coalition partners. The past month saw the first meeting of the Basic Education Funding Commission and the ramping up of the work of our school funding reform coalition. LAMPa staff also met with lawmakers to successfully secure more co-sponsors for legislation to expand the state Housing Trust Fund and asked our network to do the same. The bill, which has bipartisan support, stands a good chance of moving before the end of this legislative term. For the ongoing work of the House Majority Policy Committee statewide poverty initiative,



LAMPa helped develop and submit a memo to the subcommittee on Essentials – nutritious food, housing, health care, clothing, utilities, transportation and safety from violence.



LAMPa and the rest of the ELCA Advocacy team continued working to equip Lutherans to speak up for justice on “God’s work. Our hands.” day of service and advocacy. In addition to taking action on federal hunger, immigration and climate issues, on Sept. 7 congregations around the commonwealth will be taking action at the state level for safe, affordable housing.

The LAMPa Immigration Leadership Circle took another step in developing an ecumenical immigration detainee visitation program in York with a visit to First Friends in New Jersey and a follow-up task force meeting. Volunteer training is set to begin in mid-October, with first visits occurring in November. LAMPa has a new website! Look for the official launch in early September.

Virginia

Marco Grimaldo, Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy www.virginiainterfaithcenter.org

Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy has led the economic justice work group of the Virginia Civic Engagement Table to meet one-to-one with key legislators in support of an economic justice agenda that includes raising the minimum wage, requiring paid sick days, making the state Earned Income Credit refundable and investing in low-income housing. The next step will be to reach out to the staff on the budget committees of the General Assembly and to speak at the Republican and Democratic caucus retreats if possible.

Moral Mondays in Virginia continue in Richmond with a regular gathering across the street from the Virginia capitol. We have joined leaders from other states in calling for a Moral Week of Action that each day invites advocates to reach out to their legislators on issues of concern to their communities including worker justice, pay equity for women, Medicaid expansion, criminal justice reform, voting rights and care for our youth.

[We are also part of Virginia’s Day to Serve, which is a week-long affirmation of service starting Sept. 11.](#)

Washington

Paul Benz, Faith Action Network

www.fanwa.org

Immigration: Faith Action Network (FAN) was one of 10 advocacy organizations invited by U.S. Sen. Patty Murray’s office to a meeting on immigration issues with Deputy Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas of Homeland Security. Three key areas were discussed: detention center concerns; hunger strikers and comprehensive immigration reform; border security and deportations, and unaccompanied children issues.

Firearm background checks: FAN has endorsed Initiative 594 with the Washington Alliance for Gun Responsibility, mandating universal background checks for all gun sales in the state. ELCA Bishop Rick Jaech (Southwestern Washington Synod) will sponsor two forums later in September on preventing gun violence with the endorsement of 100 faith communities and 300 faith leaders. Faith advocates and faith communities are being encouraged to do educational forums in the next two months.

FAN’s end of the year annual dinner will be Sunday, Nov. 16, The theme is Acting on the Dream – Continuing to Build the Movement.



Wisconsin

Cindy Crane, Lutheran Office for Public Policy in Wisconsin

www.loppw.org



LOPPW held its annual advisory council/staff retreat. ELCA Advocacy's John Johnson joined the retreat along with state Sen. Jerry Petrowski.

Council members shared their congregations' and synods' social justice interests and challenges. Out of our discussions and the director's report on upcoming legislative opportunities, we chose our priorities. Sen. Petrowski's presentation influenced us to add a priority related to prison reform; John assisted us in honing our efforts on this issue.

Youth: LOPPW continues efforts on youth issues, such as addressing youth experiencing homelessness. On Sept. 10, one council member will have a half-day introductory meeting in Eau Claire concerning youth-sex trafficking issues. LOPPW will also advocate on prison reform, pushing the court system to charge 17-year old offenders as juveniles rather than as adults. Two council members will work on this in their own congregations and explore with the director ways to build awareness and advocate in their synods.

General hunger issues: LOPPW continues to address hunger issues as legislative opportunities arise. One council member will work with the director to organize a half-day conference with the intention to be able to duplicate it.

Federal: This month, LOPPW will set a plan to build awareness and advocacy on the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act, the EPA rule on carbon dioxide emission, and other federal issues related to the environment. Additionally, LOPPW's director was at a third 2015 Advocacy Day planning committee meeting organized by the Wisconsin Council of Churches.

About the ELCA's Advocacy Network:



We are a church that is energized by lively engagement in our faith and life. The **ELCA Advocacy Network** works to create and influence public policies that embody the biblical values of peacemaking, hospitality to strangers, care for creation, and concern for people living in poverty and struggling with hunger and disease.

The issues we advocate for are informed by Lutheran teachings, ELCA Social Statements, and the experiences of Lutheran ministries, programs and projects around the world and in communities across the United States.

Want to learn more about ELCA Advocacy?

Visit our [website](#) and [join the ELCA Advocacy Network today!](#)

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