



Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development

3211 FOURTH STREET NE • WASHINGTON DC 20017-1194 • 202-541-3160
WEBSITE: WWW.USCCB.ORG/JPHD • FAX 202-541-3339

August 1, 2022

Dear Senator:

As chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development, I write to welcome and encourage recent developments to safeguard our common home. The *Inflation Reduction Act of 2022* (hereinafter "the Act") includes provisions that will protect the environment and make healthcare more affordable in a financially prudent way, thus modelling the 'integral ecology' proposed by Pope Francis in his encyclical *Laudato si': On Care for Our Common Home*. In June, I [wrote](#) to you about this "critical time for investments in climate mitigation, adaptation, and innovation," calling for climate policies that "ensure secure and reliable decarbonized energy, reducing vulnerability to fluctuations in global fossil fuel markets." The Act rises to the challenge, and I am grateful for your hard work in protecting our "common home."

The historic investment in environmental provisions within the Act is expected to reduce carbon emissions by roughly 40 percent by 2030. These policies invest in the future of energy and intend to provide secure, affordable, accessible, and equitable energy without harming the economy or creating more hardship for the poor. It is good that the Act makes significant investments for innovation in clean energy, including domestic manufacturing as well as research and development in clean technologies. It is also positive that the environmental provisions include significant environmental justice investments that focus on the poor and vulnerable, the agricultural sector, fire protection, conservation and methane emissions reductions.

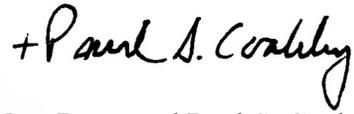
There are provisions to make some healthcare more affordable, including those that will bring down drug costs. As a critical tool to help maintain and promote good health, medicine must be affordable and accessible to all. The high cost of prescription drugs affects everyone, but low-income seniors who lack the resources to meet their healthcare expenses are especially vulnerable and will benefit from these provisions. Provisions to improve healthcare access and affordability must respect the inherent dignity and right to life of every human being¹, and, going forward, more work is needed to end all taxpayer subsidies that contribute to the destruction of human life through abortion, including through insurance.

Finally, as I [wrote](#) in June, the bishops have long advocated that the tax system should raise adequate revenues for the common good needs of society, especially protection of the poor and vulnerable. It is prudent, when there are significant concerns around inflation and the economy, that this package contains revenue generating provisions to offset the investments and decrease the national debt.

¹ Letter to Congress Regarding Moral Principles for Providing Health Care During COVID-19 Pandemic, [May 7, 2020](https://www.usccb.org/resources/letter-congress-regarding-moral-principles-providing-health-care-during-covid-19-pandemic).
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These new developments to protect the environment and help reduce the cost of some healthcare are welcome efforts in support of the common good. The USCCB stands ready to work with you as this important legislation moves forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "+ Paul S. Coakley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small cross at the beginning.

Most Reverend Paul S. Coakley
Archbishop of Oklahoma City
Chair, Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development



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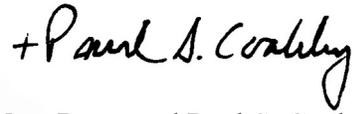
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