



The Honorable Jared Polis, Governor  
State Capitol Building  
200 East Colfax Avenue, Room 136  
Denver, Colorado 80203

Subject: Climate Action Needed Now

Governor Polis,

May the blessings and greetings of many holidays and celebrations be with you and your family. As the Climate Justice Commission of Together Colorado, we represent people of faith from virtually every tradition and region across Colorado. Last December, several hundred of us met with you to express our deep concerns that your office is not doing enough, including in enforcing existing laws, to protect Colorado residents.

**"We can't tolerate another COP to go by with those who view the climate crisis as an economic opportunity rather than a climate emergency, all the while shoving false solutions down our communities' throats. Instead of paying attention to what we have been saying for decades and even centuries to honor the sacredness of Mother Earth and all her creatures, more care is going into protecting the bottom line of the fossil fuel industry than humanity itself. Net-zero emissions does not equal zero emissions; if we want to safeguard a healthy and thriving existence for future generations we must keep fossil fuels in the ground."**

**– Ozawa Bineshi Albert  
Co-Director, Climate Justice Alliance**

Our sacred stories speak to humanity's deep relationship with nature and call us to work for a just and ethical relationship with Creation. While we live, work, and worship in Colorado, we exist in a global community. Our actions carry an impact far beyond our borders and, in turn, Colorado's mountains, plains, rivers, and deserts have all been impacted by many forces outside of our state.

We see people throughout the world and here in Colorado suffering from a changing climate. A declining snowpack threatens our watersheds. Burn scars lead to damaging mudslides. Communities of color are concentrated in environmental sacrifice zones, living with dangerous levels of pollution everyday. Right now. Right here.

As leaders within our various Colorado faith communities, we carefully watched the proceedings at the 26th United Nations Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26) in Glasgow, including a Colorado presence of US Senator Hickenlooper, US Representative Neguse, and State Representative Jackson. Colorado youth joined with Sunrise and other groups in participation and protest. Colorado-based nonprofits stood witness for those they represent.

As faith leaders, we were dismayed by many of our so-called leaders, large in rhetoric but empty in meaningful action. But we were deeply encouraged by the example set by indigenous leaders and youth, who clearly understand the moral imperative of the moment and the need to work together to build a sustainable and just future for all.

We see superficial green-washing schemes touted as transformative change. We see unjust traditional capital-based interventions that continue to harm our most vulnerable populations. We see half-measures and partial steps when we require full commitment and soaring leaps. We echo the concerns of the Indigenous Environmental Network as we caution against depending on tools of capitalism without the balance of government and community voice.

[WWW.TOGETHERCOLORADO.ORG](http://WWW.TOGETHERCOLORADO.ORG)

OFFICE: 303.399.2425 | 1980 DAHLIA ST, DENVER, CO 80220

*Together Colorado is a nonpartisan interfaith organization*



Governor Polis, we are deeply disappointed in your executive leadership, which we feel echoes the empty promises of COP 26 and fails your sworn duty to improve the health and well-being of all Coloradans by advancing and enforcing statewide laws that move us beyond failed business-as-usual.

We can and must find meaningful responses to this current crisis. We must recognize and acknowledge that many of our own practices often serve only the powerful at the cost of the most marginalized. We must no longer support these policies and personalities that remain stuck in old ways, unable to envision or build a sustainable future for all of Colorado that honors, not desecrates, Creation. We urge you to join us as a partner in building a beautiful future for Colorado, one we can all be proud of.

With hope for a changed world,  
Together Colorado Climate Justice Commission

Copies:

The Honorable Leroy M. Garcia, Jr., President of the Colorado Senate  
The Honorable Stephen Fenberg, Majority Leader, Colorado Senate  
The Honorable Chris Holbert, Minority Leader, Colorado Senate  
The Honorable Alec Garnett, Speaker of the Colorado House  
The Honorable Daneya Esgar, Majority Leader, Colorado House  
The Honorable Hugh McKean, Minority Leader, Colorado House  
His Eminence Metropolitan Isaiah, Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Denver  
Rabbi Jay Strear, President and CEO, JEWISHColorado  
The Most Reverend Benjamin Peterson, Archbishop, Diocese of the West  
The Most Reverend James R. Golka, Bishop, Diocese of Colorado Springs  
The Most Reverend Kae Madden, Bishop, Rocky Mountain Region  
The Most Reverend Samuel Joseph Aquila, Archbishop, Archdiocese of Denver  
The Most Reverend Stephen J. Berg, Bishop, Diocese of Pueblo  
The Reverend James Gonia, Bishop, Rocky Mountain Synod  
The Reverend Joan Bell-Haynes, Executive Regional Minister, Central Rocky Mountain Region  
The Reverend Karen P. Oliveto, Bishop Mountain Sky Conference  
The Reverend Steve Van Ostran, Executive Minister, American Baptist Churches of the Rockies  
The Reverend Sue Artt, Conference Minister, Rocky Mountain Conference  
The Rite Reverend Kym Lucas, Diocese of Colorado  
Venerable Jie Jing, Buddhist Association of Colorado  
Acharya Kailash Ji, Hindu Temple and Cultural Center of the Rockies  
Adrian Miller, Director, Colorado Council of Churches  
Ibrahim Hirbo, President, Colorado Muslim Society  
Lynn Smit, Stated Clerk, Synod of the Rocky Mountains  
Mary Nordhagen, President, Mountain Desert District