

May 29, 2024

Dear [Legislator Title and Last Name],

As a collection of 15 interfaith groups who represent diverse religious communities across the country, we unite in our commitment to human dignity, justice, and the sanctity of life. Today, we write to urge your immediate action on a matter of great moral and humanitarian urgency—the extension and expansion of the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (RECA).

From 1945 to 1962, the U.S. government conducted hundreds of above-ground nuclear tests. These tests spread radiation thousands of miles, exposing many communities to unsafe radiation levels. For decades, countless Americans have suffered from diseases linked to radiation exposure due to government-sanctioned nuclear activities. These individuals, many residing in communities across the Southwest, Midwest, and West, have borne the health burdens of their exposure without adequate recognition or redress.

Recently, the Senate passed the RECA Reauthorization bill ([S. 3853](#)) with strong bipartisan support, demonstrating a shared commitment across the political spectrum to right the historical wrongs caused by nuclear weapons testing and uranium mining. With the RECA program set to expire on June 7, we implore you to act swiftly to ensure this crucial legislation is passed in the House.

With the recent success of the film “Oppenheimer,” which raised public awareness about the history of nuclear weapons testing, the moral imperative to extend and expand RECA is clear. As communities of faith, we are called upon to advocate for those who are suffering. The plight of those affected by radiation exposure—often overlooked—is a poignant reminder of our duty to serve the most vulnerable among us.

As Congress considers the future of RECA, we remind you of your responsibility to ensure that all victims of radiation exposure are recognized and compensated. Merely reauthorizing the existing program, which has excluded many victims from receiving the support they deserve, is not enough. This legislation is not a simple policy adjustment; it is a crucial step towards healing and justice for thousands of Americans.

In unity with those who have suffered, and in the spirit of compassion that guides our faiths, we urge you to support and expedite the passage of the Radiation Exposure Compensation Reauthorization Act. Honor the dignity of every person affected by these tragic chapters in our nation’s history by providing them with the justice they have long been denied.

Thank you for your attention to this critical issue. We pray for your leadership and wisdom as you make decisions that align with our highest moral values and commitments to justice and healing.

Sincerely,

Alliance of Baptists

American Friends Service Committee

Franciscan Action Network

Friends Committee on National Legislation

Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns

Pax Christi Metro DC-Baltimore

Pax Christi USA

Religions for Peace USA

Sisters of Mercy of the Americas Justice Team

Sojourners

Soka Gakkai International-USA

Unitarian Universalists for Social Justice

United Church of Christ

The United Methodist Church — General Board of Church and Society

Voices for a World Free of Nuclear Weapons