

## WSSC 2009 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

### ENVIRONMENT

#### PRINCIPLES

The goods of the earth are a gift from God, and are for the benefit of everyone. Catholic teaching holds that we are stewards of creation, a stewardship that calls us to preserve our forests, maintain clean water sources, preserve species in the wild and maintain their natural habitats. Care of the earth requires each of us to thoughtfully engage in behaviors that minimize negative impacts on the environment around us.

*“True stewardship requires changes in human actions - both in moral behavior and technical advancement. Our religious tradition has always urged restraint and moderation in the use of material goods, so we must not allow our desire to possess more material things to overtake our concern for the basic needs of people and the environment.”*

Global Climate Change, a Plea for Dialogue, Prudence and the Common Good, USCCB 2001

**PESTICIDES:** Dangerous pesticides linked to cancer, birth defects, and other adverse health effects threaten the health of farm workers across the United States. These poisons disproportionately threaten the health of migrant and seasonal farm workers.

**CLIMATE CHANGE:** There is a growing movement to reduce activities that add to the production of greenhouse gases, which most scientists agree contribute to global warming. In 2007 the Governor set greenhouse gas emissions reduction and clean energy economy goals for Washington State. By 2020 emissions would be reduced to what they were in 1990, then reduced another 25% by 2035. By 2050, emissions would be fully 50% below the 1990 levels.

Responsible limits on climate pollution will establish Washington as a strong leader in the clean energy economy, increase energy independence, create new jobs, and deliver a better future for our children. Legislation may be introduced to reduce carbon emissions.

**ENERGY EFFICIENCY:** Making homes, businesses and public institutions more energy efficient will save money, create local jobs, enhance energy security, decrease pollution, and reduce the need to invest in costly generation. Enhanced home weatherization will reduce energy bills, which disproportionately impact low-income households. A bill will be introduced to make new buildings more energy efficient than existing ones, and to reduce high energy costs for low income residents.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

##### WSSC SUPPORTS:

- Changing policies to protect farm workers from the harmful effects of pesticides
- Providing incentives to reduce carbon emissions
- Creating incentives for energy efficient construction
- Developing, promoting and using renewable energy resources