

ECUMENICAL MINISTRIES *of* OREGON

Media Release

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Religious leaders call for civility during August congressional recess

Recent attempts by organized groups to disrupt town hall meeting threaten an important tool for our state's representatives in Washington, DC to communicate with their constituencies. In response, as members of Congress attempt to hold town hall meetings with their constituents, Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon (EMO) is inviting people of faith and good will to sign to "A Call for Civic Public Discourse in Oregon." The call expresses the need for public discussion with congressional representatives of important issues such as health care reform, climate change and the economy.

"As citizens and people of faith, representing many different religious traditions," the call reads, "we believe that robust public dialogue is at the foundation of American democracy."

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon leaders believe that the health of American democracy relies on the ability of everyday citizens to participate in the legislative process. Disrespectful and disruptive activities infringe on the rights of other citizens to take part in that process.

"How we participate as citizens is not only important in addressing today's issues," the petition concludes, "but we are also teaching the next generation about how to participate appropriately in a democracy. It is time to be civil in our public discourse."

The petition has been signed by over 100 religious leaders across the state since it started circulating early this week.

The call for civil discourse is posted at EMO's Web site at www.emoregon.org.

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon is a statewide association of Christian denominations—including Protestant, Roman Catholic and Orthodox bodies—congregations, ecumenical organizations and interfaith partners working together to improve the lives of Oregonians through community ministry programs, ecumenical and interreligious dialogue, environmental ministry and public policy advocacy.

MEMBER DENOMINATIONS

African Methodist Episcopal Church » American Baptist Churches of Oregon » Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) » Christian Methodist Episcopal Church » Church of the Brethren » Community of Christ
Episcopal Diocese of Eastern Oregon » Episcopal Diocese of Oregon » Evangelical Lutheran Church in America » Greek Orthodox Church » Presbyterian Church (USA)—Presbytery of the Cascades
Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) » Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Portland » United Church of Christ » Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches