



Pennsylvania Council of Churches Ministry of Public Advocacy



News and Action Summary for December 1, 2022

Empowering people of faith to make a difference for the common good!

This week has brought some wonderful news on several fronts!

First: [Federal Government to Close Berks County Residential Center](#)! The Council has been engaged in coalition with dozens of other organizations to close down this immigration detention center—which initially housed families, and now houses women—for a number of years. Stories of abuses have long swirled around this facility, which lost its state license for operating outside of the conditions of its license. This Center is scheduled to close as of January 31, 2023. Read a [Statement from #ShutDownBerks Coalition](#)



Second: ['Finally, Some Justice': Fracking Company to Pay Millions for Poisoning Town's Water](#)! You may remember the story that emerged a number of years ago about Dimock, PA, when the residents' wells were contaminated because of fracking activity in the area. Cabot Energy, the company that operated the wells, denied responsibility, and a legal battle has been going on ever since. The residents will finally receive justice as the town will be linked into a safe water system. (Ed. Note: I participated in a rally in Dimock more than 10 years ago, when a man rushed over, gave me a big hug, and thanked me for being there as a member of the clergy. A friend who was also there asked if I knew who it was, and I asked, "Should I?" It was Mark Ruffalo! Guess I should have known...)

Third: [Judicial Gerrymandering Threat Off the Table for the Foreseeable Future](#)! Some members of the PA General Assembly were trying to pass an amendment that would divide Pennsylvania into judicial districts, rather than having the judiciary elected by statewide vote, after the state Supreme Court voted that the state's Congressional districts had been gerrymandered to favor Republicans by 13-5 despite hundreds of thousands more registered Democrats. When the General Assembly failed to draw fairer lines, the Supreme Court took on the task—which resulted in an even split after the new districts were applied in 2018. The proposal died as the 2021-22 session ended.

For congregations that are interested, there are [Two weeks left in Cool Congregations Challenge](#).

We hope you will support this ministry with a generous gift, or even better a monthly gift. You can help us by going to <https://pachurches.org/shop/> where you will find our address and links to make your donation. If you want to support advocacy, scroll down the page to find the links for Public Witness Ministry.

Here's some "News You Can Use":

- [Home Energy Assistance Program Opens November 1](#)
- [PA Open Enrollment for Health Insurance Begins Nov. 1](#)
- [Medicare Open Enrollment Is Here—Things You Need to Know](#)

Many actions are available, and you can learn more in the articles below.

If you are interested in any programs that would help you to gain greater understanding and ability to be an effective advocate, contact Sandy Strauss at s.strauss@pachurches.org. **Please consider a gift to support our Ministry of Public Witness. One of the best ways you can help is to “subscribe” to this (almost!) weekly update by making a recurring contribution of \$5/month or more.** Of course, any contribution will be welcomed and appreciated!



To learn about how to keep informed between these updates, go to <http://www.pachurchesadvocacy.org>. As usual, we understand that there is a lot of information here and in the links provided for further information. **Please know that you aren't expected to act on everything! Just choose the issues that are most important to you and do something!** Sometimes you will be directed to action pages of other organizations—**don't worry!** These are organizations that we work with regularly and who share a common interest.

Please consider contacting your legislators to thank them when they support your position as well, or to express your disappointment when they don't. We don't follow up with them often enough. They need our feedback to understand how we feel. Go to <https://org2.salsalabs.com/o/5415/getLocal4.jsp> to find a summary of your federal and state legislators with basic contact information.

Our [website](#) is updated regularly. If there is something you would really like to see that isn't there, please contact us at s.strauss@pachurches.org.

URGENT ACTIONS

If you don't have time for any other actions, please consider taking action on these issues!

[Sign Letter to Senator Toomey Supporting Continuing the Expanded Child Tax Credit](#)—by December 11—**NEW**

[Tell Congress to Pass the Electoral Count Reform Act Before the Next Congress](#)—**NEW**

[Tell Congress to Invest in Critical Needs Programs Before the End of the Year](#)—**NEW**

[Tell Congress to Include Medicaid and CHIP Funding in End-of-Year Bill](#)—**NEW**

[Act Now to Protect Homelessness and Rental Assistance Funding](#)—**NEW**

[Sign the End of the Year “To-Do” List to Congress](#)—**NEW**

[Tell Congress to Pass Permanent Protections for DACA Recipients by the End of 2022](#)—**NEW**

[Tell Congress to Pass a Robust and Progressive Child Nutrition Reauthorization Bill](#)

NEW ACTIONS

[Take Action to Support Asylum Seekers](#)—**NEW**

[Sign Now to Help At-Risk Afghans in the US](#)—**NEW**

[Tell Congress to Expand Insulin Copay to All Americans](#)—**NEW**

[Tell Congress to Save Lives by Capping the Price of Insulin](#)—**NEW**

[Urge Our Senators to Support the Farm Workforce Modernization Act](#)—**NEW**

[Urge the US Trade Rep to Propose a “Climate Peace Clause” in Trade Negotiations](#)—**NEW**

[Sign Petition to Protect People, Not PFAS Polluters](#)—**NEW**

[Tell EPA to Eliminate Unnecessary Flaring of Fracked Gas](#)—**NEW**

[Tell Congress to Pass the Recovering America's Wildlife Act](#)—**NEW**

[Oppose Bill That Would Decimate Old Forests](#)—**NEW**

[Tell Costco No More Toilet Paper from Canadian Boreal Forests](#)—NEW

[Tell Congress to Protect Native Sacred Places](#)—NEW

[Call on Chubb Insurance Not to Underwrite Arctic Refuge Oil Projects](#)—NEW

[Sign Petition to Ensure Climate Justice Without Modern Slavery](#)—NEW

[Tell Our Senators to Vote for Assault Weapons Ban](#)—NEW

[Tell Congress to Fund the RECOMPETE Act](#)—NEW

[Tell Congress No More Corporate Tax Breaks](#)—NEW

[Tell Congress to Support the President's Call for a Windfall Profit Tax](#)—NEW

ONGOING ACTIONS

[Urge Your US Representative to Co-Sponsor the Environmental Justice for All Act](#)

[Tell Congress That People Seeking Asylum Deserve a Welcome with Dignity](#)

[Urge Congress to Set 200K Refugee Admissions Goal for FY 2023](#)

[Sign Now to Tell Congress to Pass the DISCLOSE Act and Overturn Citizens United](#)

[Urge the President to Take Major Action to Protect Voting Rights and Our Democracy](#)

[Tell Congress to Pass the Equality Act](#)

IMPORTANT AND TIME SENSITIVE NEWS!

[So Much Happening: Here's How You Can Keep Informed Between Updates](#)

[Summary of All News Posts Since Previous Update](#)

[Anti-Asylum Title 42 Policy Ruled Unlawful](#)

[Amid Eli Lilly-Twitter Fiasco, Groups Call for End to Insulin Price Gouging](#)

[How Religion Intersects With Americans' Views on the Environment](#)

[Minority Districts Drop After Redistricting, Despite Population Growth](#)

[Join a National Network of Super Moms](#)

EVENTS

For a full monthly calendar of events, see the Events page at <http://www.pachurchesadvocacy.org/events/>.

For a listing with descriptions of events, go to <http://www.pachurchesadvocacy.org/events/list/>.

For general information about our calendar, links to ongoing events, and how to submit events, go to <http://www.pachurchesadvocacy.org/events/about-our-calendar/>.

Ongoing/upcoming events:

[Living the Golden Rule: Faith Climate Action Week 2023](#)—April 14-23, 2023

[Caring for Creation with PA IPL](#)—First Fridays, October 2022-June 2023

[Moral Mondays—Sign Up for Notifications](#)

[Freedom Church of the Poor](#)—Sundays 6-7:30

Events in the coming weeks:

[Doug Tallamy Webinar - Endangered Species Coalition](#)—December 1

[Jesus in Islam](#)—December 3, Mechanicsburg

[Beyond Plastics: Laying the Foundation](#)—December 3

[Reclaiming Our Democracy: Redistricting, Rules and Representation](#)—December 3

[Beyond Plastics: The ABCs of Activism](#)—December 4

[Beyond Plastics: Laying the Foundation](#)—December 5

[Federal Funding Opportunities for Faith-Based Organizations/Congregations](#)—December 5

[Ecological Spirituality](#)—December 5

[Beyond Plastics: The ABCs of Activism](#)—December 6

[Post COP27 Webinar](#)—December 6

[School Board Monitor Training](#)—December 6

[Beauty Within the Beast: A Geography of Hope](#)—December 6

[Federal Funding Resources for Nonprofits and Houses of Worship](#)—December 8

[A Christian's Guide to Planet Earth](#)—December 8

[Empty Chairs: 10 Years After Sandy Hook](#): December 10, West Chester

[Local Elections: Why Do They Matter for the Environment?](#) December 12

[Executing Grace: How the Death Penalty Killed Jesus and Why It's Killing Us](#)—December 12

[Dancing with History: A Life of Peace and Justice \(George Lakey\)](#)—December 13, Harrisburg

[Clean Energy Benefits and Your Church](#)—December 14

[Sandy Hook 10 Years After Poetry Reading](#)—December 14, Wayne

[On Earth Peace Gun Violence Organizing Meet-Up](#)—December 16

[International Migrants Day Vigil](#)—December 18

OPPORTUNITIES AND RESOURCES TO LEARN AND ACT

For postings since the previous Summary...

[Resources](#)

[Opportunities](#)

[Jobs, internships and fellowships](#)

NEWS POSTS

Visit our [weblog](#) for the latest news and information. For previous News Summaries, go to <http://www.pachurchesadvocacy.org/news-summary/news-summary-archive/>. Also, check out specific issue-related posts by clicking on links on the right side of the page.

Subscribe to our weblog via e-mail (see link at bottom of [home page](#)).

[Summary of most recent News Posts.](#)

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Subscribe to our YouTube channel at https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCunqnFIOcrIn_o715zhITIA.

If you received this message from a friend, **sign up for Pennsylvania Council of Churches Advocacy e-mails** at http://org2.salsalabs.com/o/5415/p/salsa/web/common/public/signup?signup_page_KEY=531.

Financial support for the Council's Advocacy Ministry is always welcome! Go to our online support page at <https://www.pachurches.org/shop/> and look for "Public Advocacy Donation."

And finally...**PLEASE FORWARD THIS E-MAIL!**

Empowering people of faith to make a difference for the common good!