

Whereas, the fee and dividend approach of the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act of 2019 provides an effective reduction in fossil carbon pollution, is good for people, especially the poor, is good for the economy, is supported by members from both major parties, and is revenue neutral; and

Whereas, the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act of 2019 applies a fee on extraction of fossil carbon, returns the money to people as a dividend, supports fair international trade, and increases the fossil carbon fee yearly; and

Whereas, the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act of 2019 is bi-partisan and neither supports nor rejects other proposals related to climate change; it can co-exist non-competitively with such proposals;

Therefore, be it resolved that the Thirty-second General Synod of the United Church of Christ expresses its clear support for the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act of 2019, H. R. 763;

Be it further resolved that the Thirty-second General Synod encourages all settings of the United Church of Christ to seek ways to learn more about climate change and solutions;

Be it further resolved that the Thirty-second General Synod encourages the national setting of the United Church of Christ make available resources to learn about and engage with people of other faiths on climate change;

Be it finally resolved that the Thirty-second General Synod encourages members and settings of the United Church of Christ to speak out for energy innovations and conservation to reduce climate change.

Funding:

The funding for the implementation of the resolution will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

Implementation:

The Officers of the Church, in consultation with appropriate ministries or other entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.

7. A RESOLUTION TO ABOLISH THE GROWTH AND EXISTENCE OF PRIVATE PRISONS

Moderator Williams called on Maria Brace of the Penn Northeast Conference to present the recommended actions from Committee #1.

Maria Brace moved, on behalf of Committee #1, to recommend that the Thirty-second General Synod of the United Church of Christ adopt the resolution to abolish the Growth and Existence of Private Prisons as amended by committee.

There was a motion to amend the motion.

The amendment to the motion was ruled out of order.

Discussion:

Four spoke in favor of the resolution.

19-GS-32 VOTED: The Thirty-second General Synod of the United Church of Christ adopts Resolution to Abolish the Growth and Existence of Private Prisons.

(Vote: 646 Yes; 27 No; 4 Abstentions – 677 electronic submissions registered)

A RESOLUTION TO ABOLISH THE GROWTH AND EXISTENCE OF PRIVATE PRISONS
A Resolution of Witness

Text of the Resolution

Whereas, we are each created equal and in the image of God (Genesis 1:26; Galatians 3:28), an indisputable truth in our faith tradition which leaves no room for profiting from the bondage of any human being;

Whereas, the U.S. has the highest rate of incarceration in the world and African Americans, Latinos, Latinas, and indigenous peoples are disproportionately incarcerated in the United States;

Whereas, between 2000 and 2015 the number of people incarcerated in private prisons increased by 45 %, compared to an overall rise in the prison population of only 10 %.

Whereas, income and profit for private prisons are dependent upon maintaining a large and stable inmate population. Therefore, the incentive for increasingly imprisoning human beings is based upon greed and without regard for alternatives to incarceration, or efforts to achieve justice reform or rehabilitation.

Whereas, there are proven instances of inadequate health care for incarcerated persons, death and injury suffered by incarcerated persons caused by inadequate security staffing levels and inadequate training for security staff which are attributable to cost saving measures that bolster the profits of privately owned or operated prisons.

Whereas, insidious partnerships have been successfully pursued to increase the number of persons housed in private prisons. Said partnerships lend governmental support and structure to profiting from imprisonment of human beings. Specifically, the private prison industry has collaborated with organizations which assist in developing and advocating for passage of model legislation that is shared and often adopted by states, such as “Three strikes” laws and mandatory minimum sentences with virtually no opportunity for parole. Said legislation and other laws similarly supported by the private prison industry serve to increase the inmate population of the facilities from which profit is realized. Through these actions the private prison industry has

gained power to establish and grow prisons beyond any conceivable need.

Whereas, corporate and/or systemic structures, or individuals which derive profit from the imprisonment of human beings serve to perpetuate the legacy of slavery, oppression and heartless greed which the United Church of Christ has long sought to expose and correct;

Whereas, we are admonished as followers of Christ to "Remember those who are in prison, as though you were in prison with them; those who are being tortured, as though you yourselves were being tortured;" (Hebrews 13:3)

Now therefore be it resolved, that the Thirty-second General Synod of the United Church of Christ calls upon the national setting of the United Church of Christ to enable and encourage local churches and conferences to develop methods to:

- a. Raise the church's consciousness of the theological, social, racial, ethnic and economic inequities which accompany the existence and/or increase of privately owned or operated correctional and holding institutions including, but not limited to prisons, jails, and detention centers (hereafter referred to as PRIVATE PRISONS).
- b. Monitor and advocate against proposals for state and federal criminal justice and sentencing laws which serve to increase and support the increase of the inmate population of PRIVATE PRISONS.
- c. Actively divest of corporations which operate PRIVATE PRISONS. Advocate that corporate suppliers to or corporate investors in PRIVATE PRISONS cease these activities. Implement an action plan for divestment from corporations which supply to or invest in PRIVATE PRISONS which do not demonstrate these changes.

Therefore, be it further resolved, that the Thirty-second General Synod of the United Church of Christ calls upon the U. S. Congress, state legislatures, and local governments to ban government contracting with, or approval of, the existence of PRIVATE PRISONS.

Be it finally resolved, that the Thirty-second General Synod of the United Church of Christ calls for appropriate legislation accompanied by the appropriate oversight mechanisms of U.S. Congress, State legislatures, and local governments to immediately require existing PRIVATE PRISONS to provide optimum spiritual, medical, physical, and mental care, as well as safety measures.

Funding:

The funding for the implementation of the resolution will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

Implementation:

The Officers of the Church, in consultation with appropriate ministries or other entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.