

# Petition: Preaching Climate Change Denial as a Chargeable Offense

**Rationale:** The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has recognized that humanity has less than 12 years to mitigate the worst effects of human-caused climate change. Even heroic efforts will not stop tremendous environmental and economic hardship for future generations.

Although our social principles indicate that human-caused climate change is a cause of concern, a massive disinformation campaign of climate change denial has weakened political will across the globe. Even followers of Jesus Christ, though charged by God with the stewardship of creation in Genesis 1:26-27, have acquiesced to rhetoric meant to preserve the power of wealthy fossil fuel producers. Our Social Principles also recognize that the effects of climate change will be borne by the world's poorest countries. Because human-caused climate change is an existential crisis for our planet that does real harm, preaching climate change denial from the pulpit should be a chargeable offense as indicated by ¶2702.1(e), "disobedience to the order and discipline of the United Methodist Church," as it contradicts our social principles.

Amend ¶2702.1(e) as follows: "disobedience to the order and discipline of the United Methodist Church, including denial of human-caused climate change;"

*Submitted by: Dave Barnhart, Pastor, Saint Junia UMC*

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**Committee vote: 6 Yes (Concurrence) 1 No (Non-concurrence)**

**The role of the Committee is not to approve or disapprove the content of a particular petition or resolution but to ensure that they have followed the appropriate process (as outlined in our standing rules) and that they are in agreement with the Book of Discipline, including our Social Principles, and our standing rules.**