

# Oklahoma Conference of Churches



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The Rev. Nathan Allen  
President, Board of Directors

Dear Oklahoma Legislators:

As our attached Theological Statement on Environment states, “The Oklahoma Conference of Churches affirms that we are stewards of God’s creation—the soil, water, air, plants, and creatures .... We have a moral obligation to protect the planet on which we live—to respect God’s creation, to ensure a safe and hospitable environment for all human beings, and to seek to live in harmony with all creation ....” Accordingly, **the IMPACT Committee of the OCC opposes HJR 1012**, which seeks a Constitutional amendment that would provide, in part:

*... the rights of citizens and lawful residents of Oklahoma to engage in farming and ranching practices shall be forever guaranteed in this state. The Legislature shall pass no law which abridges the right of citizens and lawful residents of Oklahoma to employ agricultural technology and livestock production and ranching practices without a compelling state interest.*

Oklahoma has a long and proud history of agriculture and no one legitimately argues with the right to farm and ranch in our state. Existing laws on the books protect that right (see, 50 OS sec. 1-1.1). However, the suggestion of a Constitutional amendment that might limit the legislature’s future ability to rightly regulate agricultural practices for the protection of the people, animals, and environment, seems less than wise and a potential danger. What is a “compelling state interest?” Should not the legislature rather than the courts determine this? We fear even reasonable regulation of agricultural practices enacted by the legislature might be deemed to “abridge” the right to “employ agricultural technology and livestock production and ranching practices” under this broad language.

OCC believes that the legislature, in its role as protector of the people and environment of this state, should support policies “that develop and test safe alternatives to chemicals used for growing, processing, and preserving food” and that “serve to reduce and control the creation of harmful industrial, agricultural and municipal byproducts and waste ....” (see attached statement). HJR 1012, and the constitutional amendment it seeks to enact, would thwart your ability to do just that. **We urge you to vote against HJR 1012.**

Respectfully,

Marilynn Knott  
Chair, Environment Focus Area  
IMPACT Committee

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African Methodist Episcopal



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Christian Methodist Episcopal



Cooperating Baptist Fellowship of Oklahoma



Cumberland Presbyterian



Episcopal



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Mennonites



Presbyterian Church USA



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Reformed Church in America



Roman Catholic



Society of Friends

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