

GENERAL CONVENTION OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH 2018
ARCHIVES' RESEARCH REPORT

RESOLUTION NO.: 2018-D081

TITLE: Helping Communities Affected by Change in Energy Use

PROPOSER: The Rev. Paula Jackson

TOPIC: Economic Justice

Directly Related: (Attached)

2012-B023 Seek Environmental Justice

Indirectly Related: (Available in the [Acts of Convention](#) database, searchable by resolution number)

2012-D087 Urge Job-Creation Legislation

In preparing this report, the Archives researched the resolutions in the Acts of Convention database for the period 1976 through 2015, selecting "direct" resolutions that have a substantive bearing on the proposed legislation. The "direct" resolutions are attached and "indirect" resolutions are available in the Acts of Convention database. Committee members who require other research assistance should contact the Archives at 800-525-9329 before Convention or at Convention in the General Convention Secretariat.

D081 Helping Communities Affected by Change in Energy Use

Proposer	The Rev. Paula Jackson
Endorsed by	Reed, Mr. David; Scott, The Rev. Marshall
Sponsored by	
Page numbers	Blue Book: p. N/A; Constitution & Canons: p. N/A
HiA / Leg. Cttee	/
Current Status	Pre-Filed Resolution
Version	Original (as filed)
Review Status	Not yet reviewed

RESOLUTION TEXT

- 1 *Resolved*, the House of _____ concurring, That the 79th General Convention of The Episcopal Church recognize that society's dependence on coal and other fossil fuels has created communities across the supply chain that are not just economically, but culturally and socially identified with the industry; and that the long-term unsustainability of those fuels and inevitable transition to other sources of energy places the livelihood and culture of these communities at risk; and be it further
- 2 *Resolved*, That The Episcopal Church call on its members at all levels to develop programs that address the negative impacts on these communities of the economic and energy transition away from fossil fuels; and that it specifically direct the Office of Reconciliation, Justice, and Creation Care to devote financial and program resources to community development and community organizing efforts intended to ease this transition and strengthen communities in Appalachia and other fossil fuel dependent areas; and be it further
- 3 *Resolved*, That The Episcopal Church direct the Office of Government Relations and the Episcopal Public Policy Network to advocate for policy initiatives intended to ease this transition for communities in Appalachia and other fossil fuel dependent areas by increasing the availability and quality of jobs; access to vocational training, community college and other educational opportunities; availability of childcare and early childhood education; access to adequate and stable housing; and other relevant community services, including support for the Appalachian Regional Commission and other agencies that invest in community development in these regions; and be it further
- 4 *Resolved*, That the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget, and Finance consider a budget allocation of \$300,000 for the implementation of this Resolution.

EXPLANATION

Communities in the Appalachian coalfields or the oilfields of Texas and Louisiana are sometimes described as "environmental sacrifice zones"; areas that bear the environmental and public health costs of our society's dependence on the fossil fuel industry. But these areas also depend on that

industry for jobs and tax income as well as communal and personal identity and cultural patrimony. Most necessary environmental activism – including on the part of The Episcopal Church – fails to acknowledge that the move away from fossil fuels to renewable sources of energy, while necessary and ultimately inevitable, will mean significant economic and cultural losses for these communities. These losses will affect communities all along the fossil fuel supply chain, from extraction through transportation and processing to energy production.

This resolution complements the other environmental resolutions under consideration at General Convention by committing the Church's advocacy and resources to help communities transition to new economies. It directs the Church's advocacy agencies, the Office of Government Relations and the Episcopal Public Policy Network, to support initiatives that help communities meet the most urgent needs likely to arise as the fossil fuel industry becomes less viable: for jobs and income, and the training to perform those jobs; for childcare and early childhood education; for stable housing and community infrastructure in the absence of the fossil fuel industry; and for environmental restoration to repair the damage done by the fossil fuel supply chain.

The resolution also calls on the Church at all levels to create programs to assist with this transition. Local parishes can be particularly important in sustaining the social capital communities' need to weather imminent economic and cultural changes. Efforts to provide skills training and service industry employment to replace lost coal jobs have often failed because they have neglected to account for the importance of coal to individuals and communities' identity and the deep resistance to any form of assistance seen as a "handout". Local parishes can support community development and organizing efforts to strengthen community identity and solidarity, and to empower communities to meet their own needs and develop their own assets. It is with this in mind that the resolution directs the Office of Reconciliation, Justice, and Creation Care, as the apparent successor to the Domestic Poverty Office and the office with oversight of the church's Asset-Based Community Development and the Advisory Council for the Stewardship of Creation, in its grant-making capacity, to focus some part of their resources to these needs.



Resolution Number: 2012-B023

Title: Seek Environmental Justice

Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended

Final Text:

Resolved, That the 77th General Convention of The Episcopal Church stands in solidarity with those communities who bear the greatest burdens of global climate change: indigenous peoples, subsistence communities, communities of color, and persons living in deprivation around the world; and be it further

Resolved, That the 77th General Convention calls on congregations, institutions, dioceses, and the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of The Episcopal Church to support policies that provide tangible benefits to overburdened “frontline” communities (those already experiencing the impacts of climate change) and “fence-line” communities (those suffering in body and spirit for their proximity to the extraction and processing of fossil fuels); and be it further

Resolved, That the 77th General Convention calls on congregations, institutions, dioceses, and the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of The Episcopal Church, to work for the just transformation of the world’s energy beyond and away from fossil fuels (including all forms of oil, coal, and natural gas) and toward safe, sustainable, renewable, community controlled energy, and that fossil fuel workers and their families be supported during the transition to a “post-carbon” society; and be it further

Resolved, That the 77th General Convention calls on congregations, institutions, dioceses, and the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of The Episcopal Church to resist the development and expansion of ever more unconventional, dangerous, and environmentally destructive sources of fossil fuel and move toward conversion to more sustainable sources; and be it further

Resolved, That the 77th General Convention calls on congregations, institutions, dioceses and the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of The Episcopal Church to support the self-determined aspirations of communities around the world, who, like the Inupiaq Community of Kivalina, Alaska, having emitted minimal amounts of carbon and having received negligible material benefit from fossil fuel consumption, nevertheless bear the brunt of climate-change impacts; and be it further

Resolved, That the 77th General Convention calls on congregations, institutions, dioceses and the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of The Episcopal Church, including Episcopal Relief and Development, to support the implementation of grassroots, community-based solutions to climate change, including, but not limited to, adaptations to improve local resilience, to build local food sovereignty, to support ecological restoration and economic re-localization.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Indianapolis, 2012* (New York: General Convention, 2012), p. 324.