



CONTACT:

Susana McDermott

Director of Communications

Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility (ICCR)

201-417-9060 (mobile)

smcdermott@iccr.org

RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS UNDERScore THEIR FUNDAMENTAL RIGHT TO MANAGE THEIR INVESTMENTS IN ALIGNMENT WITH THEIR BELIEFS, TEACHINGS, AND VALUES

NEW YORK, NY, TUESDAY, AUGUST 26, 2025 – Today, the [Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility](#) (ICCR), a coalition of over 300 institutional investors who, for more than 50 years, have been leaders in faith-consistent and sustainable investing, issued a [statement](#) in defense of this practice as a question of religious freedom protected under the U.S. Constitution.

The statement follows recent attacks on ethical investing, including an [inquiry](#) from the House Judiciary Committee, which accused investors employing investment strategies to mitigate deleterious environmental and social impacts — including several of ICCR’s faith-based members — of violating antitrust laws.

“Since our inception over 50 years ago, ICCR has brought together faith-based investors who engage directly with portfolio companies on issues reflecting the values of their faith traditions, and who believe that corporations must view the well-being of all of their stakeholders — including their workers and the communities where they operate — as integral to their long-term value,” said Josh Zinner, CEO of the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility. ***“Faith and values investors have always made common cause supporting the health and future of people and planet, and their engagements have helped catalyze important changes at the world’s most powerful companies. The increasing politicized attacks on ESG and faith-consistent investors aim to thwart this important work, and risk violating our country’s free speech and freedom of religion guarantees.”***

Some of the issues where faith investors cooperate to press for a change in corporate practices include the climate crisis, forced labor and worker rights, and health equity. According to the statement, religious organizations view investor engagements with portfolio companies on these issues as central to both their duties as trusted fiduciaries seeking competitive returns and their responsibilities as faithful stewards supporting the fundamental values of their religious traditions. The statement further affirms that faith investors believe that “companies that adopt forward-looking policies and practices to mitigate environmental and social risks are well-positioned for long-term financial success and value creation. Conversely, companies that ignore these risks may endanger the performance of the capital we are called to steward, and impose enduring external costs on society, the economy, and the planet that sustains us.”

Documents such as the [2016 Edinburgh Finance Declaration](#) seek to articulate the shared values of faith investors.

“Catholic sisters have been engaged in socially responsible investing for more than fifty years because our faith demands it. As women religious and faith-consistent investors, we strive to enhance the common good by investing in companies that promote human flourishing and environmental justice and by challenging companies that cause harm,” said Ann Scholz, SSND, Director of Corporate Social Responsibility for the School Sisters of Notre Dame Collective Investment Fund. ***“Our faith-consistent investing ministry is one very important way that we seek to address the social and economic injustices of our day and work to establish God’s beloved community.”***

Said Christopher Cox, Executive Director at Seventh Generation Interfaith Coalition for Responsible Investment, ***“For generations, faith communities have heard the call to invest with a clear moral purpose—aligning our financial choices with our deepest beliefs. Faith-consistent investing is a powerful witness that our economic decisions can and must serve the common good, protect creation, and uphold human dignity.”***

The statement cites the Constitution’s ban against government interference in the free exercise of religion, which protects faith investors’ right to freely make investment decisions in accordance with the values of their religious organizations. Examples of the investment guidelines of several faiths are included. In addition to the First Amendment, the statement cites the Church plan exemption in the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 as a basis for religious institutions to be exempt from the federal government’s overreach.

“Through the decades, faith-based investors have brought crucial issues to companies concerning the environment, human rights, and corporate governance,” said Katie Carter, Director of Faith-Based Investing and Shareholder Engagement at the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). ***“As other levers of influencing change become more difficult, leveraging our financial resources with companies is more important than ever.”***

Said Steven Owen, Strategic Marketing Manager, FaithInvest, ***“Faith-consistent investing, when thoughtfully implemented, can lead to improved investment outcomes by addressing systemic risks that traditional investment approaches often overlook. And, faith-consistent investors, with their focus on long-term stewardship and values alignment, are well-positioned to contribute to a market environment where all participants can benefit.”***

About the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility (ICCR)

The Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility (ICCR) is a broad coalition of more than 300 institutional investors collectively representing over \$4 trillion in invested capital. ICCR members, a cross-section of faith-based investors, asset managers, pension funds, foundations, and other long-term institutional investors, have over 50 years of experience engaging with companies on environmental, social, and governance (“ESG”) issues that are critical to long-term value creation. ICCR members engage hundreds of corporations annually in an effort to foster greater corporate accountability. Visit our website www.iccr.org and follow us on Twitter/X (@iccronline), [LinkedIn](#), and [Facebook](#).

###