

Reference and Counsel – Motion 1.3

MOTION 1.3

RELATING TO: A timely phasing out of fossil fuel subsidies by the Government of Canada

SUBMITTED BY: Director of Public Policy and Service Ministries, Eastern Synod, ELCIC

PREAMBLE:

The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) and its member churches' call to justice with the theme of "Creation Not for Sale" (LWF 12th Assembly, 2017) undergirds advocacy for our only home, the Earth. Recognizing with other partners and organizations, such as Kairos and Citizens for Public Justice, that an urgent call is needed for a timely, peer-reviewed process of phasing out fossil fuel subsidies to Canada's coal, oil, and gas industries.

In 2015, the ELCIC passed a Resolution on Climate Change and stated that as part of our mandate, we: "urge heads of state and key decision makers to make it a personal priority and address the human contribution to Climate Change, and make a firm commitment for deeper cuts in carbon pollution."

The federal and provincial governments of Canada give (CAD) \$3.3 billion annually in subsidies to fossil fuel producers, made up of both extraction incentives and research and development. These subsidies contradict the federal government's own Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change and its efforts at a national carbon pricing plan to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from fossil fuel production and consumption. As President of the World Bank, Jim Yong Kim, stated, "Fossil fuel subsidies send out a terrible signal: burn more carbon."

In 2009, Canada, along with other G20 countries, committed to phasing out fossil fuel subsidies. This commitment was reiterated by Prime Minister Trudeau and Finance Minister Bill Morneau at the G7 meetings in March 2017. Though the federal government has moved to implement national carbon pricing in 2018, fossil fuel subsidies continue to undermine climate action in Canada and "more money will flow annually from government to oil and gas producers in Canada than the money collected through carbon pricing between now and 2020."

The effects of Climate Change are being experienced now by all, but they are being experienced most disproportionately by Indigenous Peoples and by those living in northern and in coastal regions of the world. The slow action on the Paris Agreement (2015) by parties, of which Canada is one, is placing the world on a 3 degree Celsius trajectory. To use the federal government's own words, "the cost of inaction is greater than the cost of action."

MOTION:

We urge the Government of Canada to phase out fossil fuel subsidies and to "commit to undertaking a fossil fuel subsidy review under the G20 process, so that Canadians will finally have a transparent, public-facing, globally-available document that highlights the seriousness

of Canada's commitment to transitioning away from subsidized fossil fuel energy, and indicates how this will happen." We ask:

1. That the Bishop of the Eastern Synod, ELCIC, write to the Prime Minister of Canada before the G20 meetings in Buenos Aires, Argentina (November-December 2018) and the COP24 (Conference of Parties) meetings in Katowice, Poland (December 2018) encouraging Canada's role as a Climate Change leader by setting a clear, transparent timeline for the phasing out of fossil fuel subsidies.
2. That congregations, ministry areas and individual members continue to pray for the Earth, our common home.
3. That congregations, ministry areas, and individual members re-acquaint themselves with the ELCIC's Resolution on Climate Justice
<http://elcic.ca/Documents/documents/ClimateJusticeMotionFINAL.pdf>
4. That congregations, ministry areas, and individual members are encouraged to write to their MP's, MPP's and MLA's calling for an end to government fossil fuel subsidies and urging the transition to a low carbon economy.
5. That congregations, ministry areas, and individual members continue their efforts of reducing their own carbon footprints (see link for resources
<http://elcic.ca/stewardship/stewardship-of-creation/default.cfm>).

RECOMMENDATION:

Adoption