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Faith Leaders To Congress: Help Tone It Down

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Distinctly Catholic

A group of faith leaders from many denominations have written a letter to members of Congress in the wake of the Arizona massacre, calling for less rancor and vitriol in public debate. The letter was released by the group Faith in Public Life. Here is the full text:

Dear Members of Congress,

As Americans and members of the human family, we are grieved by the recent tragedy in Tucson, Arizona. As Christian, Muslim and Jewish leaders, we pray together for all those wounded, including Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords as she fights for her life. Our hearts break for those lives lost and for the loved ones left behind. We also stand with you, our elected officials, as you continue to serve our nation while coping with the trauma of this senseless attack.

This tragedy has spurred a sorely needed time of soul searching and national public dialogue about violent and vitriolic political rhetoric. We strongly support this reflection, as we are deeply troubled that rancor, threats and incivility have become commonplace in our public debates.

We appreciate the sacrifices you make and risks you incur by accepting a call to public service, and we urge you to continue to serve as stewards of our democracy by engaging ideological adversaries not as enemies, but as fellow Americans.

In our communities and congregations, we pledge to foster an environment conducive to the important and difficult debates so crucial to American democracy. In our churches, mosques and synagogues, we come together not as members of a certain political ideology or party, but as children of God and citizens called to build a more perfect union. We pray that you do the same.

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