

[OVT-022] Internal Displacement Crisis within the United States**Source:** Presbytery**Committee:** Unassigned**Event:** 226th General Assembly (2024)**Sponsor:** South Louisiana Presbytery**Type:** General Assembly Full Consideration

Recommendation

On the Internal Displacement Crisis within the United States

The Presbytery of South Louisiana overtures the 226th General Assembly to, along with other faith groups, develop policy positions for internally displaced persons within the United States and its territories similar to those addressing the concerns of externally displaced persons.

Rationale

Currently the PC(USA) has policy positions for externally displaced populations and refugees, but there is very little addressing the growing issues of internal displacement within the United States.

Thus, we ask that the General Assembly lift up this request to all the appropriate entities within the PC(USA) for guidance and support. This is not a financial request but a request that our various entities can have the authority to speak to these issues against forced relocation of Tribal and historied communities and to lift up the human and environmental rights of all communities when they are considering adaption of place, be it resettlement, relocation, or staying in-place.

Presbyterians have always been leaders in understanding the theology and the mission work of population change. The population stressors due to weather and climate conditions will make it imperative that our church understand and address the work and possibilities for our mission work now and into the future.

The PC(USA) has stood against institutional and environmental racism. It has taken a stand against the Doctrine of Discovery and stood with Tribal Nations and Indigenous peoples against colonial practices. The PC(USA) has taken a stand to protect threatened lands through the guarding of wetlands and humanitarian stands on the international refugee crisis. It is time to pull these efforts together for the displaced peoples of our own country.

This overture comes from the Presbytery of South Louisiana and its partners, including the Tribes of the First Peoples' Conservation Council and the Lowlander Center, a non-profit supporting persons living in the lower Mississippi Delta.