



**Cornwall
Alliance**

For The Stewardship Of Creation

News Alert

Media Contact: **Melinda Ronn**
917.743.7836

Media@CornwallAlliance.org

Perceived Southern Baptist Split on Global Warming Evaporating Most Prominent Signer Reaffirms SBC Resolutions Critical of Global Warming Alarm, Calls Science “Conflicting At Best”

Washington, DC (March 11, 2008) - In response to the well-publicized announcement of the Southern Baptist Environment and Climate Initiative, Dr. E. Calvin Beisner, national spokesman for the Cornwall Alliance for the Stewardship of Creation, issued the following statement today:

This declaration, though sincere, is being used to give the false impression of a major split among Southern Baptists over global warming. Indeed, according to the most prominent signer, Southern Baptist Convention President Frank Page, the official position of the SBC has not changed from earlier resolutions that question global warming claims.

Dr. Page clarified that he does not think the denomination’s resolutions have been “too timid,” according to a separate statement issued the same day. “As Southern Baptist Convention President, I totally stand behind the resolutions that have been passed in recent years.... The scientific research on human-induced global warming is conflicting at best.”

The Cornwall Alliance applauds Dr. Page’s clarification.

Last year more than 8,600 duly elected Southern Baptist messengers representing some 3,500 churches and 16 million members voted overwhelmingly to urge caution “in the human-induced global warming debate in light of conflicting scientific research,” and called for public policies that guarantee “an appropriate balance between care for the environment, effects on economics, and impacts on the poor when considering programs to reduce [emissions].”

The Cornwall Alliance for the Stewardship of Creation is a national coalition of clergy, theologians, religious leaders, scientists, academics, and policy experts committed to bringing a balanced Biblical view of stewardship to the critical issues of environment and development.

Beisner continued:

This declaration says much less than it claims. It acknowledges that respected scientists and informed Christians disagree sharply about the severity and causes of global warming. It admits that the signers lack sufficient expertise to evaluate competing claims. It points out that environmental concerns are secondary to abortion and family for Christians, and that our response to climate change cannot be derived directly from Scripture. It calls for a unified moral voice on climate change and states that mere affirmations will likely make no practical difference, but its “intense concern” is divorced from any willingness to engage even the simplest practical questions. Which scientists have the better argument? Is adapting to climate change more effective than attempts to

stop it? Which would save more lives and make better use of current technology? The signers don't specify; instead, after stating that there is conflicting evidence, they resolve to stop "lingering over the basic reality of the problem or our responsibility to address it...however great or small."

This declaration claims much more than it says. It states that the signers have studied the issue but avoids any discussion of even the most basic concepts. It warns that caution "may be seen by the world as uncaring, reckless and ill-informed," but it doesn't say what should be done. It derides as "too timid" the resolution adopted last summer with overwhelming support at the Southern Baptist Convention's annual meeting, but it frankly goes no farther and shows less awareness of the difficult scientific and economic debates that complicate the issue. Sadly, this effort seems more concerned with newsworthiness than substance. It insists that we're not doing enough, without ever defining the problem or saying what more must be done.

References

- **A Southern Baptist Declaration on the Environment and Climate Change:**
<http://www.baptistcreationcare.org/node/1>
- **SBC Resolution on Global Warming:**
<http://www.sbcannualmeeting.org/sbc07/resolutions/sbcresolution-06.asp?ID=6>
- **Statement by Dr. Richard Land (President of the SBC's ERLC):**
<http://erlc.com/article/erlc-president-reacts-to-southern-baptist-declaration-on-the-environment-an>
- **Statement by Dr. Frank Page:**
<http://www.sbc.net/PresidentsPage/FrankPage/PressRelease-03-10-2008Page.asp>
- **Cornwall Alliance:** <http://www.cornwallalliance.org/press>