



MODERATOR OF THE 2018 GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The Rev. Daniel Cho, B.A., M.Div.

Friday, January 18, 2019

The Hon. Catherine McKenna, M.P. P.C.
Minister of the Environment and Climate Change,
House of Commons,
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

Dear Minister,

I bring you greetings on behalf of the 144th General Assembly of The Presbyterian Church in Canada which met June 3-6, 2018 in Waterloo, Ontario.

The approach in the report on synthetic biology focusses on our commitment to the care of God's creation and in terms of analysis, was cautious. We understand that there is potential in synthetic biology to contribute to the common good, including reducing human suffering and even cleaning up environmental disasters. These applications are to be welcomed. Military applications of synthetic-biology can pose tremendous risk and are very troubling.

I am writing to inquire what policies and procedures the Government of Canada has in place to monitor and assess the impact of the unintended release of synthetic biology organisms outside of a target area or ecosystem, in particular those organisms designed to create a gene drive?

Thank you for your attention to this letter. I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours Sincerely,

Rev. Daniel Cho
Moderator
The 144th General Assembly
The Presbyterian Church in Canada

CC: The Hon. Ed Fast, PC party critic, Environment and Climate Change; Alexandre Boulerice, NDP critic, Environment and Climate Change.