

January 20, 2010

Senator Al Franken
United States Senate
320 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510-2304

Dear Senator Franken:

In an extraordinary act of faith-based environmental activism, the 2009 General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalists passed a resolution on June 28th, 2009 calling for the protection of Utah's wild lands. As a UU congregation, the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Mankato would like to express support for the passage of America's Red Rock Wilderness Act (S 799/HR 1925) and encourage you to stand with us in working to preserve and protect America's natural places and our planet as a whole.

In central Utah there exists one of the largest remaining untouched and undesignated wilderness lands in the lower 48 states. We believe it deserves the highest form of land protection our laws can offer. By voting for America's Red Rock Wilderness Act, you will be designating 9.4 million acres of this special area for preservation, retaining opportunities for hiking, camping, scientific study and the psychological refreshment people feel by experiencing wilderness. You will also be protecting a vast array of native flora and fauna, archeological resources and places sacred to Native Americans, as well as providing a sustainable economic foundation for the people of the area.

Our support for the Act is grounded in the Seventh Principle of Unitarian Universalism: "Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part." We see protecting wilderness as part of a sacred responsibility. If passed, the Act will help protect some of the last wild spaces in our country from mining, drilling, off-road vehicles and other uses that would be detrimental to its quality.

We join with many other faith communities in our state and around the nation to call upon you personally and Congress as a whole to pass America's Red Rock Wilderness Act as an affirmation of your vital commitment to good stewardship of wild places in America, recognizing their importance to current and future generations.

Thank you for your vision and vote.

On behalf of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Mankato,

Laura Bealey, president UUFM Board of Directors