

The Honorable President Donald J. Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Re: Ohio clergy response to POTUS correspondence dated September 3rd, 2020

September 23, 2020

Dear President Donald Trump

Thank you for your dedicated service to our nation. Recently we received your correspondence addressed to Pro Life leaders dated on September 3, 2020. As Head of the Executive Branch, our faith community would like to take this time to thank you for using the influence of your office for good.

As evangelical leaders of over one hundred (101) multi-ethnic and multi denominational congregations throughout the North Central Ohio Buckeye Bible Belt, we have listed, (with the assistance of FRC Action), what we believe are twenty noteworthy achievements of your Administration. The following:

On January 23, 2017 President Trump reinstated and expanded the Mexico City Policy, which blocks funding for international organizations that perform or promote abortion. T

On February 22, 2017, the Department of Education (DOE), in conjunction with the Department of Justice (DOJ) rescinded President Obama's guidance that required public schools to allow transgender students to use the bathrooms and showers of their choice.

On May 4, 2017 President Trump signed an Executive Order Promoting Free Speech and Religious Liberty (known as the "Religious Liberty Executive Order"), broadly setting forth religious liberty as a policy priority of the administration, and requiring all federal agencies to take action to protect it.

On September 7, 2017 DOJ filed an amicus brief with the Supreme Court defending the religious freedom rights of baker Jack Phillips in Masterpiece Cakeshop v. Colorado Civil Rights Commission.

On December 6, 2017, President Trump announced that the United States would begin recognizing Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and officially open the U.S. Embassy there.

On January 18, 2018, The Department of Health & Human Services (HHS) announced a new Conscience and Religious Freedom Division within its Office of Civil Rights (OCR). This new division was established to enforce federal laws that protect conscience rights and religious freedom.

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On May 22, 2018 HHS issued a new proposed regulation reversing the Title X family planning regulations implemented by President Clinton. The proposed regulation would restore the separation of abortion services from the federal Title X family planning program. The proposed regulation would also ensure parents are more involved in the decisions of minors to obtain services from Title X clinics. It reverses the discriminatory abortion referral requirement the Clinton regulations implemented

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On June 13, 2018 DOJ announced the Place to Worship Initiative, designed to increase enforcement and public awareness of the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act (RLUIPA). This federal law protects places of worship and other religious uses of property. Through this initiative, federal prosecutors will receive training about legal protections for houses of worship.

On July 24-26, 2018, the State Department held the first-ever Ministerial to Advance Religious Freedom. Political and civil society leaders from around the world gathered in Washington, D.C. for a three-day summit to discuss religious freedom issues and solutions. The Potomac Declaration, issued at the Ministerial, made a strong statement about the state of religious freedom around the globe and provided a plan of action for promoting global religious freedom.

On December 26, 2018 DOJ filed an amicus brief with the Supreme Court defending a publicly displayed, cross-shaped veteran's memorial that had been challenged as a violation of the Establishment Clause.

On January 1, 2019, State Department withdrawals from the United Nations agency UNESCO for its record of anti-Israeli bias in policies and public resolutions.

On January 19, 2019 at the request of 169 members of Congress and 49 senators, President Trump sent a letter to House Speaker Nancy Pelosi in which he promised to veto any legislation that weakens current pro-life federal policies and laws.

On March 25, 2019 President Trump declared that the United States would begin recognizing the Golan Heights as sovereign territory of the State of Israel.

In August 2019, DOJ filed amicus briefs with the Supreme Court in two important religious liberty cases, R.G. & G.R. Harris Funeral Homes, Inc. v. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and Bostock v. Clayton County/Altitude Express, Inc. v. Zarda. Through these filings, DOJ advanced a biologically binary definition of sex and those who operate accordingly, whether because of science or religious belief.

On November 19, 2019 HHS issued a rule removing burdensome requirements that all grantees, including those that are faith-based, must accept same-sex marriages, and profess gender identity as valid in order to be eligible to participate in grant programs. This included the adoption and foster care space, where these requirements had been used to shut down faith-based providers of foster care and adoption.

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On January 16, 2020, the DOE and the DOJ issued guidance on constitutionally protected prayer and religious expression in public elementary and secondary schools. This guidance ensures that prayer in schools is properly protected and not unconstitutionally prohibited or curtailed.

On January 24, 2020 President Trump became the first sitting president to give remarks in person at the annual March for Life in Washington, D.C. In his address he stated the eternal truth that every child is a sacred gift from God and reiterated his effort to defend the dignity and sanctity of every human life.

On March 24, 2020 DOJ filed a statement of interest in a case protecting women against men intruding on their sporting competitions. The statement made clear that athletic qualifications on the basis of “gender identity” were harmful to women’s sports.

On April 17, 2020 the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) included “clergy for essential support” in its list of personnel and entities deemed “essential” for purposes of responding to the coronavirus. This designation allows clergy and pastors more freedom to continue to operate and serve those around them in need at this time. On April 27, Attorney General William Barr directed federal prosecutors to monitor and, if necessary, take action to correct state and local policies that discriminate against religious institutions and believers while battling the coronavirus pandemic.

On August 18, 2020, the Human Fetal Tissue Research Ethics Advisory Board which was convened as a part of President Trump’s June 5, 2019 fetal tissue research policy issued recommendations on the ethics of fetal tissue research proposals. The board recommended against funding thirteen of the fourteen proposals because of ethical concerns with how fetal tissue from aborted babies would be used. This board will continue to review any new fetal tissue research proposals applying for federal funds.

President Trump, based on this list of policy decisions, as (101) faith leaders, we consider you an advocate for religious liberty and are convinced that you have come to the Oval Office for such a time as this.

In closing, we ask that you please consider the wise words of Puritan Founding Father John Winthrop in his sermon during the 1630’s before settling the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Winthrop predicted that “If we follow the counsel of the Prophet Micah, to “do justly, to love mercy, to walk humbly with our God,” then

“The Lord will be our God, and delight to dwell among us, as His own people, and will command a blessing upon us in all our ways...We shall find the God of Israel among us, when ten of us shall be able to resist a thousand of our enemies; when He shall make us a praise and glory. For we must consider that we shall be as ‘a city upon a hill.’ The eyes of all people are upon us. So that if we shall deal falsely with our God in this work we have undertaken, and so cause Him to withdraw His present help from us, we shall be made a story and a by-word through the world.”

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We encourage you to stay the course. We continue to pray for your continued safety and wisdom in governing our nation. May GOD bless America, and more importantly, may America bless GOD.

Respectfully,

Pastor John Bouquet	Pastor James Marshall	Pastor Robert O'Brien
Pastor J.C. Church.....	Pastor Doug Tackett	Pastor Rick Lewis
Pastor Anthony Cooper.....	Rabbi Bob Bauer	Pastor Russ Smith
Pastor Larry Hill	Pastor Mark Meyer	Pastors Les & Grace Farley
Pastor Sylvester Ginn	Pastor Layton Broome	Pastor Dink Porter
Pastor Bryan Schatzinger	Pastor Mark Dettmer	Pastor Jody Odom
Pastor Dan Zediker	Pastor Patrick Bailey	Pastor Hank Webb
Pastor Tim George	Pastor Brian Phillips	Pastor Howdie Burnette
Pastor Paul Larson	Pastor Mark Wireman	Pastor Dallas Waggle
Pastor Denny Finnegan	Pastor John Grimm	Pastor Earl Eiklor
Pastor Les Champer	Pastor Ben Gregg	Pastor George Lewis
Pastor Jim Garrett	Pastor Randy Raynes	Pastor El Akuchie
Pastor John Temple	Pastor Steve Brenneman	Pastor Chad Hayes
Pastor Kevin Evans	Pastor Jerry O'Brien	Pastor Art Kennard
Pastor James Spencer	Pastor Mike Rose	Pastor Joe Beran
Pastor Les Vnasdale	Elder Mark Hamilton	Pastor Joe Smith
Pastor David Bates	Pastor Clyde Kerby	Pastor Steve Schag
Pastor Mark Abel	Pastor Don Wilson	Pastor Steve Baldridge
Pastor Tim Davis	Pastor Ferlie Yates	Pastor Rick Wiseman
Pastor Ron Smals	Pastor David Parson	Pastor Steve Burkhalter
Pastor James Mitchell	Pastor Dan Rebon	Pastor Dan Baer
Pastor Ron Puff	Pastor Rick Maddox	Pastor David Guild
Pastor Rich Hurles	Pastor Ted Howard	Pastor Eric Byrom
Pastor Steve Dennis	Pastor Chris Spencer	Pastor Glenn Phillips
Pastor Matt Pond	Pastor David Ferrell	Pastor Bruce Copley
Pastor Paul Matthewson	Pastor David Mahon	Pastor Rob Ratcliff
Pastor Jason Price	Pastor Clint Zeigler	Pastor Robert Kurtz
Pastor Matt Smith	Pastor Bruce Philippi	Pastor James Hill
Pastor Joseph Maggelet ...	Pastor Justin Lawhorn	Pastor Christopher Replogle
Pastor Aaron Boggs.....	Pastor Paul Staton	Pastor Thomas Crank
Pastor Mike Wilson	Pastor Dana Gammill	Pastor Mike Grant
Pastor Mark Galambos	Pastor Charles Burgess Jr.	Pastor Matthew Potosky
Pastor Faron Cole.....	Pastor Jesse Griffin	Pastor Ricky Branham
Pastor Dave Rentzel.....	Pastor Darren Smith	
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