

Majority Leader Chuck Schumer
Hart SOB, 322
Washington, DC 20510

Speaker Kevin McCarthy
Rayburn HOB, 2468
Washington DC 20515

Minority Leader Mitch McConnell
Russell SOB, 317
Washington, DC 20510

Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries
Longworth HOB, 1607,
Washington, DC 20515

September 28, 2023

Dear Majority Leader Schumer, Minority Leader McConnell, Speaker McCarthy, and Minority Leader Jeffries,

On behalf of the Faith for Equality Coalition, we are writing to voice our strong opposition to the nearly 40 anti-LGBTQ+ amendments proposed to the 12 Fiscal Year 2024 House Appropriations bills. As you negotiate a final spending package, we urge you to reject all amendments targeting LGBTQ+ people and their families.

As people of faith and conscience, we are gravely concerned about these efforts to discriminate against the LGBTQ+ community. Amendments stripping LGBTQ+ individuals of life-saving healthcare, targeting Pride flags and drag shows, and discriminating against same-sex couples in programs across the federal government are antithetical to our nation's founding principles of equality. These include Norman #257, which would prohibit military servicemembers' children enrolled in the Exceptional Family Member Program from using federal funds for gender-affirming care. We are here to say that it is fact, not politics, that gender-affirming care is best practice, life-saving healthcare, as supported by every major medical organization.¹ Additionally, amendments prohibiting pride flags from being displayed on government buildings send a message to the LGBTQ+ community that such identities are not welcome in public life. This will cause great harm to the well-being of the community, which already faces mental health challenges disproportionate to the general population.²

A partial government shutdown does not benefit either side of the aisle, nor does discriminating against American citizens. **Vast majorities of most major religious groups support nondiscrimination protections for LGBTQ+ people:** Unitarian Universalists (97%), Buddhists (87%), Jewish Americans (85%), Hindus (85%), Latter-Day Saints (Mormons) (84%), Hispanic Catholics (83%), white mainline Protestants (82%), Muslims (75%), Orthodox Christians (67%),

¹<https://glaad.org/medical-association-statements-supporting-trans-youth-healthcare-and-against-discriminatory/>

² <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/survey-2023/>

white Catholics (80%), evangelical Protestants (61%), Jehovah's Witnesses (59%), and members of other religions (80%) support nondiscrimination laws to protect LGBTQ+ people.³

Our respective faiths teach us that everyone deserves to live life with dignity and respect. To respect one's basic human dignity, we must defeat the attempt to weaponize the must-pass appropriations bills to advance an anti-LGBTQ+ agenda.

Respectfully,

Interfaith Alliance

Keshet

National LGBTQ Task Force

National Organizations

18Doors

African Communities Together (ACT)

Ameinu

American Jewish World Service

Another Story®

Association of Welcoming & Affirming Baptists

Avodah

A Wider Bridge

Bayard Rustin Liberation Initiative

Bend the Arc: Jewish Action

Catholics for Choice

DignityUSA

Estuary Space

Faith for Black Lives

Faith in Public Life Action

Grassroots Leadership

Hispanic Federation

Human Rights First

Immigration Hub

Jewish Alliance for Law and Social Action

Jewish Council for Public Affairs

Jewish Labor Committee

Jewish World Watch (JWW)

Jews for a Secular Democracy

jGirls+ Magazine

³ <https://www.prr.org/research/americans-support-for-key-lgbtq-rights-continues-to-tick-upward/>

MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger
Methodist Federation for Social Action
Multifaith Voices for Peace and Justice
Muslim Alliance for Sexual and Gender Diversity (MASGD)
National Council of Jewish Women
NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice
New Ways Ministry
Parity
Rabbinical Assembly
Society for Humanistic Judaism
SOJOURN: the Southern Jewish Resource Network for Gender & Sexual Diversity
The Episcopal Church
The Maiden Group
Union for Reform Judaism
United Church of Christ, Justice and Local Church Ministries
Voto Latino
Women of Reform Judaism

State and Local Organizations

Al Otro Lado
Carolina Jews for Justice
Cathedral of Hope United Church of Christ
Charlotte Clergy Coalition for Justice
Congregation Beth El Binah
Congregation Beth El Keser Israel
Faith Commons
Family of God Church ELCA & UCC
First Unitarian Church of Oklahoma City
First United Methodist, Powell and Lovell, WY
Fort Tryon Jewish Center
Interfaith Alliance of the Bluegrass
Interfaith Alliance of Colorado
Interfaith Alliance of Iowa
Interfaith Alliance of North Dakota
Interfaith Alliance of Oklahoma
Interfaith Alliance of Southwest Florida
Interfaith Alliance of Texas
Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Phoenix
Jewish Family Services of Greensboro
Jewish Federation of Broward County

Jewish Federation of Greater Rochester
Jewish Federation of Greater Rockford
Jewish Federation of Southern New Jersey
Lake Oconee Community Church
Keshet Pittsburgh
Makom Shelanu Congregation
Missionary Oblates
Multifaith Voices for Peace & Justice
National Council of Jewish Women, Arizona Section
National Council of Jewish Women, Dallas Section (TX)
New Hope Unitarian Universalist Congregation
Or Hadash, PA
People Power United
ReconcilingWorks: Lutherans for Full Participation
SAJ-Judaism that Stands for All
Social Justice Committee of Congregation Beth Israel
SouthWest Unitarian Universalist Church
Temple Emanu-El
The Respect Diversity Foundation
Tzedek Georgia
Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Wayne County
Wyoming Interfaith Network