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TO: Ohio Pastors and Churches
FROM: Liberty Counsel
DATE: July 7, 2023
RE: Pastor and Church Support for Ohio Ballot Issue 1

Dear Ohio Pastors and Churches:

Liberty Counsel is a national nonprofit litigation, education, and public policy organization established in 1989. Liberty Counsel provides *pro bono* legal representation and services within our mission of advocacy for life, religious liberty, and the family. All of Liberty Counsel's services are provided at no cost. Liberty Counsel has provided successful representation to numerous pastors and churches in matters of First Amendment and constitutional law.

Consistent with our *Political and Legislative Guidelines for Pastors and Churches* (attached for your ready reference) Liberty Counsel urges you to support Ohio Ballot Issue 1. Early voting begins on July 11, 2023. Lives are at stake. Thus, Churches should support and promote this ballot initiative without fear for tax-exempt status or baseless legal attacks. Consistent with the call by Faith2DirectAction to protect Life, in church services, Ohio churches may:

1. [Show the 30 second video](#);¹
2. **Hand out "VOTE YES" literature & yard signs; and**
3. **Have people speak during the service and recruit volunteers to help pass Issue 1.**



Ohio Issue 1 is a long-needed amendment to the Ohio Constitution to ensure that a bare 50.1% majority vote obtained through outside influences or other means does not undo decades of pro-Life and faith-based work. An abortion initiative is almost certain to appear on the ballot in Fall 2023.

Churches can protect Life by speaking out now and supporting Ohio Ballot Issue 1, or the work of the last 50 years is at risk. Ohio Issue 1 will take immediate effect if enacted, on August 8, 2023, and will shield the Ohio Constitution from the coming attack in November from the current pro-abortion initiative to strike down every pro-Life Ohio law and enshrine abortion on demand until birth into the Ohio Constitution.

¹ <https://rumble.com/v2yo8mi-ohio-vote-yes-for-life-august-8th.html>

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POLITICAL AND LEGISLATIVE GUIDELINES FOR PASTORS AND CHURCHES

by Mathew D. Staver, Esq.

SUPPORTING OR OPPOSING CANDIDATES	CHURCH	PASTOR
Endorsing or opposing political candidates	No	Yes
Contributions to political candidate	No	Yes
In-kind and independent expenditures for or against political candidates	No	Yes
Contributions to Political Action Committees	No	Yes
Appearance of political candidate at church meeting or service	Yes	N/A
Introduction of political candidates at church	Yes	Yes
Political candidate to preach or read scripture (contributions should not be solicited & message should not urge people to vote for the candidate)	Yes	N/A
Voter registration programs and campaigns (non-partisan)	Yes	Yes
Distribution of candidate surveys and incumbent voting records (avoid editorial opinions)	Yes	Yes
Distribution in church parking lot of political statements and opinions on political issues (so long as no church endorsement)	Yes	N/A
Rent or loan church mailing lists to political candidates (list must be made available to all candidates on similar terms and prices)	Yes	N/A
Church bulletin political ads at regular price and news stories	Yes	N/A
Church bulletin editorial where the pastor or staff member endorses or opposes a candidate	No	No
Church bulletin editorial regarding political issues or two different church members take opposing views on a candidate	Yes	N/A
Use of church facilities by political candidates (if all other candidates are allowed or invited)	Yes	N/A
Fund-raising for candidates	No	Yes
Campaigning for candidates	No	Yes
Educate members of the public about viewpoints of candidates	Yes	Yes
Discuss church doctrine pertaining to candidate views such as abortion, homosexuality and marriage	Yes	Yes
Granting use of name to support a political candidate	No*	Yes*
Support or oppose judicial, department or cabinet appointments	Yes	Yes
Support or oppose judicial candidates	No	Yes
Support or oppose other political appointments of non-elected officials	Yes	Yes
SUPPORTING OR OPPOSING LEGISLATION	CHURCH	PASTOR
Use of church facilities by lobbying groups to discuss social issues	Yes	N/A
Rent or loan church mailing list to lobbying groups	Yes	N/A
Preach sermons on social issues and political issues and activism	Yes	Yes
Educate on political process and political/social/legislative issues	Yes	Yes
Petition drives supporting or opposing legislation or citizen initiatives	Yes	Yes
Support or oppose legislation unrelated to the church organization	Yes**	Yes
Support or oppose legislation that directly relates to the organization	Yes***	Yes
Encourage people to voice for or against legislation or citizen initiatives	Yes**	Yes
Lobby candidates to support or oppose legislation or citizen initiatives	Yes**	Yes
Distribute position papers supporting or opposing legislation or citizen initiatives	Yes**	Yes

*A pastor may include title and church affiliation in a personal endorsement along with the following notation: "Title and affiliation for identification purposes."

**Churches and other 501(c)3 organizations may support or oppose legislation so long as such activity comprises an insubstantial part of the overall operation. A 501(c)4 organization may support or oppose legislation without any limitations.

***A church or any other 501(c)3 organization may without limitation support or oppose legislation that directly affects the organizational structure and operation of the organization. For example, a church may without limitation oppose legislation attempting to repeal the tax-exempt status of the church.