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Pastors and Christian ministry leaders have a high calling to preach the truth from the Word of God. Speaking the truth is essential all the time but it is especially important to do so when we elect leaders who will make law and policy that affect our faith, our families and our freedom. There is an ongoing struggle for the soul of America. Many people look to pastors and Christian ministry leaders for guidance on important moral and social issues.

Some people and organizations want pastors and Christian ministry leaders to remain silent while Rome burns. In the past some pastors and ministry leaders have received unsolicited letters making erroneous statements, which state that pastors may not address the views of political candidates and may not preach about biblical or moral issues because they are “political.” Sometimes these letters, or statements in the media, claim that churches will lose tax exemption if pastors speak about political or moral issues. Such claims are false and are mere scare tactics designed to silence Christian viewpoints. Do not be confused or intimidated by such claims.

To help you fulfill your high calling to fearlessly speak the truth, Liberty Counsel provides free information about what pastors and churches may do with respect to political candidates and lobbying. Liberty Counsel is a nationwide, religious liberty, public interest law firm dedicated to advancing religious freedom. Liberty Counsel has multiple regional offices and affiliate attorneys throughout the country. As a nonprofit ministry, Liberty Counsel provides free legal advice and representation. Our attorneys are some of the finest in the country.

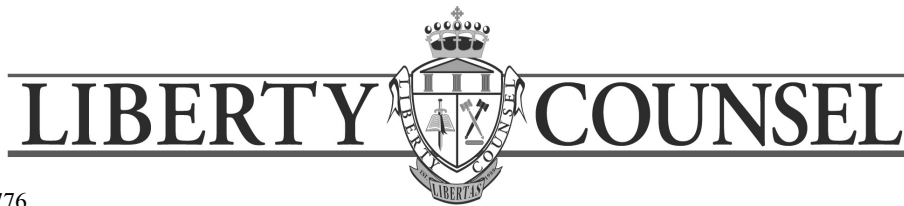
If you have any questions or need any advice, please call 1-800-671-1776 or visit www.LC.org. Liberty Counsel provides a free DVD entitled *Pastors, Churches and Political Activity*. There is also a free article by the same name and a free one-page document entitled *Political and Legislative Guidelines for Pastors and Churches*.

As a former pastor and now a constitutional attorney and law school dean, I know what it means to be called to preach and speak the truth. Liberty Counsel is dedicated to helping you fulfill your calling to preach the Word of God to this generation.

Sincerely,

Mathew D. Staver, Esq.

MDS:clm



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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.