

LIBERTY COUNSEL



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POLITICAL AND LEGISLATIVE GUIDELINES FOR PASTORS AND CHURCHES

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| 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 vote 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.