



# Ethical Action Report



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## **Separation of Church and State: Keep Intelligent Design out of our Schools**

Recently, a crucial front in the battle over separation of church and state has developed in our school systems as the religious right has attempted to inject creationism into the science curriculum under the deceptive title “Intelligent Design”.

### **BACKGROUND**

Intelligent Design is an argument that the universe is best explained by intelligent cause, rather than an undirected process such as natural selection, one of the key evolutionary theories. Though the intelligent agent directing action in Intelligent Design theory is not specified, it is clear that most proponents of ID regard this to be a divine figure. These proponents purport that ID is a scientific theory that should be considered equal or superior to theories of evolution and have argued for its inclusion for study in science classrooms.

Intelligent Design is not science and has no place being taught alongside evolution. As the U.S. National Academy of Sciences has stated, it does not hold up to the rigor of scientific investigation: it cannot be tested by experiment, it does not generate any predictions, and it proposes no new hypotheses of its own. At best, ID is nothing more than pseudoscience.

The federal courts have consistently ruled that Intelligent Design furthers a religious agenda and has no place in public schools. Moreover, we put our students and future scientists at a disadvantage when we do not provide them with an honest and rigorous education.

#### **ACTION**

Call your state representative and urge him or her to oppose all legislation that would support intelligent design and other anti-evolution theories. Please support the teaching of evolution in our classroom and ensure that religion remains separate from science.

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### **Save Darfur: Demand President Bush Make Darfur a Priority**

A dire situation has been developing in Darfur and it is time to let President Bush know that enough is enough!

#### **BACKGROUND**

For the past three years, Darfur has been the site of a massive genocide. More than 400,000 people have been killed since tensions began, and more than 2 million people have been displaced to camps in Sudan or refugee camps in Chad. These people face numerous threats, such as murder, starvation, or rape, and it is uncertain if or when they will be able to return home.

Tensions began in 2003, when the government-backed Janjaweed militia, along with Sudanese armed forces, became embroiled in a fight with two rebel groups, the Sudanese Liberation Army/Movement and the Justice and Equality Movement. The Sudanese government has used this fight as an excuse to slaughter the innocent civilian populations – the Fur, Masalit, and Zaghawa. Entire villages have been burned and destroyed, tens of thousands have died, and women and girls are continually targeted as victims of rape.

The Bush Administration has already recognized the situation as genocide, yet very little has been done. Various peace agreements have been brokered between the Sudanese government and the rebel forces, yet the violence has failed to cease. The Sudanese government has refused to allow a UN peacekeeping force into the region, and the humanitarian aid agencies there are facing grave difficulties bringing relief.

It is vital that President Bush make Darfur a priority during his Mideast meetings. Let him know that the situation in Darfur is unacceptable and action must be taken! Demand that Bush strengthen the African Union peacekeeping force in Darfur, push for the development of a strong UN peacekeeping force, and increase humanitarian aid to the region.

#### **ACTION**

Please call President Bush and urge him to take action against the world's worst humanitarian crisis. For more information, please visit [www.savedarfur.org](http://www.savedarfur.org).

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## **Sensible Drug Policy: Stop Prosecuting Sick People**

Medical marijuana has been scientifically proven to help people who suffer from a range of ailments, such as cancer and HIV/AIDS. It can alleviate nausea and loss of appetite for those undergoing chemotherapy and other treatments with adverse side effects.

### **BACKGROUND**

Marijuana remains a schedule one drug, which means that the federal government refuses to legally acknowledge that marijuana has any medical value. Even though several states, such as California, Washington, and Nevada, have legalized marijuana for medical use, the Drug Enforcement Agency continues to arrest and prosecute those who distribute marijuana for medical purposes and those who use marijuana to alleviate suffering. In addition, those who are prosecuted by the DEA are not allowed to cite medical purposes as a defense. Thus, those who are seriously ill and those who want to help them are sent to jail under these draconian laws.

As a society we should not allow this practice to continue. We need to protect our sick and those who help them. Marijuana, far from being the demon drug our federal government makes it out to be, is a safe, effective, and inexpensive drug. If it were made more widely available, sick people would have access to an important drug that would improve their quality of life.

### **ACTION**

Call your representatives and ask them to support legislation that halts the prosecution of sick people by requiring that the federal government respect the medical marijuana laws of the states.

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## **Human Rights: Support the Habeas Corpus Restoration Act of 2007**

The Military Commissions Act of 2006, an unconstitutional and dangerous law, stripped detainees held by the U.S. of one of our most fundamental rights: habeas corpus. Habeas corpus, which dictates that prisoners cannot be held indefinitely without legal charge, is a hallmark of the rule of law, yet it was abandoned in the face of President Bush's overzealous war on terror in the name of national security.

### **BACKGROUND**

The Military Commissions Act of 2006 was signed into law by President Bush on October 17, 2006. The stated purpose of the Act is to "facilitate bringing to justice terrorists and other unlawful enemy combatants through full and fair trials by military commissions, and for other purposes." However, some provisions of the law allow for indefinite detention of "unlawful enemy combatants" without trial.

Moreover, according to some legal scholars and some Congressional members, the law could be interpreted in such a way as to allow for indefinite detention of American

*citizens*, as well. They claim that the wording of the Act makes it possible to indefinitely detain and torture anyone on the President's whim.

Such action would not be unprecedented, no matter how staunchly the Bush administration claims the provisions of the Act would be used properly. For example, Jose Padilla, an American citizen, was declared as an unlawful enemy combatant and held for three years without charge. During Padilla's detention, he claims he was subjected to sensory and sleep deprivation and was made to endure stress positions.

However, not all is lost! Senators Leahy (VT) and Specter (PA) have introduced the "Habeas Corpus Restoration Act of 2007 (S 185), which would right the problematic provisions of the Military Commissions Act of 2006 by granting detainees legal recourse.

#### **ACTION**

Please write your senators and ask them to support the Habeas Corpus Restoration Act of 2007 (S 185).

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