



# Ethical Action Report



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**Healthy Children:** Tell Congress Not to Let President Bush Put the Health of Children in Jeopardy!

Write to your congressional representatives and demand they vote to override President Bush's veto of a bill that would expand the State Children's Health Insurance Program by providing health insurance to millions of additional children.

## BACKGROUND

On October 3<sup>rd</sup> President Bush vetoed an expansion of SCHIP, the State Children's Health Insurance Program, despite strong bipartisan support from Congress. SCHIP provides insurance to children whose families can't afford private health insurance but don't

qualify for Medicaid. This new legislation would have expanded SCHIP by \$35 billion over five years, insuring an additional four million lower-to-middle-income children.

Bush argued that an expansion of SCHIP would hurt insurance companies. So, President Bush, is it better to hurt children than business? We have an ethical responsibility to our children to keep them healthy, and expanding SCHIP is a good start.

House Democratic leaders have scheduled an override vote on the SCHIP veto for October 17<sup>th</sup>. But at this time they don't have the 2/3rds vote to override a veto. So we need your help! Please contact your congressional representatives and urge them to vote to override Bush's veto. The next generation will thank you.

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## **Reproductive Rights: Help End the Global Gag Rule Once and for All**

Please contact your congressional representatives and urge them to keep the global gag rule repeal in the final Fiscal Year 2008 Foreign Operations spending bill. The global gag rule hurts women around the world.

### **BACKGROUND**

Recently the Senate voted to repeal the global gag rule in the Fiscal Year 2008 Foreign Operations spending bill. The bill now goes to conference committee so that the Senate and House versions of the bill can be reconciled. It's important that we make sure the Senate language is included in the final spending bill that is sent to President Bush to sign.

The global gag rule denies federal funds to non-governmental organizations that perform abortions, provide counseling and referral for abortion, or lobby to make abortion legal or more available in their country. It was reinstated by President Bush on his first day in office in January 2001.

The gag rule hurts family planning and reproductive health services in developing countries. It hasn't reduced abortions globally, and actually makes it difficult for women to get the services they need to avoid unwanted pregnancy in the first place.

NGOs shouldn't be forced to choose between vital U.S. funding or the ability to provide the family-planning services that third-world women desperately need. We can dramatically improve poor women's lives around the world. Please urge Congress to keep language in the Foreign Operations spending bill to repeal the global gag rule.

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## **LGTB Equality: Stop Efforts to Remove Gender Discrimination from the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA)**

Please contact your congressional representative and ask them to oppose any version of the Employment Non-Discrimination Act that doesn't include both sexual orientation and

gender identity. The LGTB community is under particular threat from discrimination in the workforce and it's important that we extend protection to them in order to further the cause of equality.

## BACKGROUND

Due to an intense lobbying effort by foes of equality, Congress has decided to move forward with a version of ENDA that doesn't include gender identity. We can't allow this version to continue. Studies and surveys consistently show that between one-third and one-half of all LGBT respondents have suffered employment-related discrimination. Transgender people, in particular, desperately need the protections ENDA would provide.

The lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community and their friends have worked very hard to include transgender protections to the legislation, and we can't give up now! It's important to stand up for the original version of ENDA that includes both gender identity and sexual orientation so that the LGBT community can be guaranteed protection from workplace discrimination.

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## **Separation of Church and State: Oppose Efforts to Endorse Discrimination by Religious Universities!**

Write a letter to your senator demanding that the quality of higher education not be compromised by special treatment for religion! A provision in the Higher Education Amendments for 2007 bill would force private accreditation agencies to disregard their own standards when evaluating religious schools.

This bill could undermine academic standards in our universities. Help us stop it today!

## BACKGROUND

Private accreditation agencies (such as the American Psychological Association or American Bar Association) give validity to universities and ensure that certain guidelines and principles are met. They are an essential part of the higher education system, and have rigorous standards that often include the need for a school to have a non-discriminatory policy.

However, the proposed provision in the Higher Education Amendments for 2007 gives rise to a dangerous precedent. Agencies could be forced into a situation where they have to accredit a program simply because the government says so, despite the fact that the program in question falls way short of the academic standards the agency – and the American people – expects. For example, suppose that a religious school has a psychology program that teaches students that mental health disorders can be treated by religious conversion. An accrediting agency may be forced into validating this program because the school could claim that these teachings are part of its religious mission that, under the proposed legislation, the agency must ignore – a completely absurd situation.

The standards of these agencies must not be compromised. We as a nation value the integrity of our education far too highly for it to come under threat from insidious government legislation that is based on a religious agenda. Please write a letter urging your Senator to oppose this provision today!

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## *Contacting Elected Officials*

### **White House**

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The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20500

*Phone Number*

Comments: (202) 456-1111  
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President George W. Bush:  
president@whitehouse.gov

Vice President Richard Cheney:  
vice.president@whitehouse.gov

### **Congress**

*Mailing Address*

United States Senate  
*or*

U.S. House of Representatives  
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Capitol Switchboard: (202) 224-3121

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Visit [www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov) or [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov) to  
use your representatives' e-mail contact forms.

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