



# Ethical Action Report



*A joint publication of the American Ethical Union and the American Humanist Association*

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Number 08-09

September 2008

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**Human Rights:** Reaffirming Opposition to Torture

**The National Leaders Council (NLC) and the American Ethical Union, together with the American Humanist Association, reaffirm our opposition to Torture.**

**Whereas:** Respect and reverence for human dignity is the foremost principle of Ethical Culture and Humanism, and the use of torture is the most heinous violation of human dignity, and

**Whereas:** We remain absolutely and unalterably opposed to the employment of torture by the military, intelligence agencies, law enforcement agencies and other actors public or private, and

**Whereas:** The employment of torture in direct and willful violation of the United Nations Convention on Torture has become a component of American policy in its “War on terror,”

**Therefore:** The American Ethical Union and The American Humanist Association call upon Congress and the President of the United States:

- To immediately and unconditionally cease the practice of torture everywhere, including the transfer of prisoners to other jurisdictions where torture may be employed, and
- To allow unfettered access and inspection of any and all sites and facilities, and
- To avow without reservation to abide in its international agreements and honor the highest standards of human rights, and
- To openly recognize and apologize for all transgressions, to allow for due process, and, whenever and wherever possible, to make restitution to their victims.

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**Furthermore:** We call upon Ethical Culture Leaders, Ethical Culture Societies of The American Ethical Union and members of the American Humanist Association to inspire and advocate for the end of present American policy and the “torture debate” within the halls of Congress.

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## **Support the Millennium Development Goals: Urge your Senators to Pass S. 2166**

Send a message to your Senators urging them to pass S. 2166, the Jubilee Act for Responsible Lending and Debt Cancellation.

### BACKGROUND

The Jubilee Act for Responsible Lending and Debt Cancellation (S. 2166) would continue to cancel the debts of dozens of poor countries around the world so that they can invest in achieving the Millennium Development Goals. The House has already passed the Jubilee Act, and the Senate Foreign Relations Committee has given the bill its strong bipartisan backing. Senate floor approval is all that remains, but with time tight on the congressional calendar for the remainder of the year, there's no guarantee that the Jubilee Act will receive a vote. That's why your voice is needed to urge action now.

Jubilee is something very practical for the health and wholeness of our world, as crippling debt burdens are siphoning money from the poorest countries that should be spending it on the health and critical basic needs of their people. The successful Jubilee 2000 movement resulted in groundbreaking but limited debt cancellation for some poor countries. It taught us that debt relief works, leading to clean water, childhood vaccinations, school enrollment, and fighting HIV/AIDS and malaria. That's why debt relief is one of the spokes of the MDGs, and why it's so important to begin canceling the debts of countries that have seen no debt relief so far and which need it to meet the MDGs by 2015. The Jubilee Act begins this vital process.

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## **Reproductive Freedom: Speak out Against Anti-Woman HHS Draft Regulations**

Write a letter opposing new draft regulation that threatens women's access to birth control and reproductive freedom.

### **BACKGROUND**

This summer, the Department of Health and Human Services issued an official proposed regulation that would undermine women's access to birth control and other reproductive health care services. The draft regulation might be interpreted as defining hormonal birth control as abortion.

Contraceptive pills and devices that help women avoid unplanned, unwanted and forced pregnancies are NOT abortions - they are a major key to reducing the need for abortion. Our federal government should support national and state efforts to protect women's access to health care -- not undermine them.

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## **Election 2008: Protect the legal rights of all people**

Write your elected officials and ask them to consider the legal rights of all people.

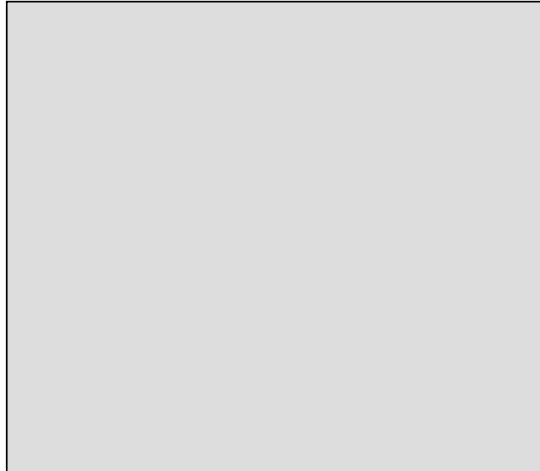
### **BACKGROUND**

We need your help to keep ethical culture and humanist issues in the forefront of politicians' minds as they gather at the national conventions. With candidates flaunting their religious credentials, we need to make it impossible for them to ignore non-religious Americans.

The number of Americans who don't hold a traditional view of God is growing. Let's make that clear to our leaders. The more of us who ask for a broader interpretation of nontheistic religion the more our elected representatives will realize we are a significant constituency.

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## *Contacting Elected Officials*



### **Congress**

*Mailing Address*

United States Senate

*or*

U.S. House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515

*Phone Number*

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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