



Ethical Action Report



*A joint publication of the American Ethical Union (AEU) and the
American Humanist Association (AHA)*

Number 09-02

February 2009

Don't forget to celebrate Darwin Day on February 12th!

Find more information here: www.discoverdarwin.co.uk/happy-birthday/

In this issue:

Separation of Church and State: Ask President Obama to Say “No” to the Boy Scouts!

Taxation without Representation: Support the DC Voting Rights Act (HR 157)

GLBT Equality: Support Equal Benefits for Same-Sex Partners in the State Department

Sensible Drug Policy: Urge President Obama to Halt Medical Marijuana Raids

The *Ethical Action Report* does not represent the views of the American Ethical Union or the American Humanist Association. The American Ethical Union takes ethical positions on public affairs only through resolutions adopted by its Assembly or Board. Past AEU resolutions are available, searchable by date or topic, at: <http://aeu.org/library/byresolution.php?case=resolutions>.

Separation of Church and State: Ask President Obama to Say “No” to the Boy Scouts!

Write to President Obama and ask him to take a stand against discrimination and decline the title and role of honorary president of the Boy Scouts of America (BSA), if and when it's offered to him.

BACKGROUND

The BSA has acted vigorously in recent years to deny the participation of nontheistic and gay and lesbian members and employees and expel those already involved. Even though it has become a tradition for presidents of the United States to take on this role, discrimination against nontheists, gays and lesbians can't be condoned. Please help Obama keep his campaign promise to bring change to the nation and represent all Americans.

A coalition of 19 nontheist organizations have already sent a sign-on letter to the president-elect urging him to decline the title and role of honorary BSA president. Now's your chance to add your own voice to the effort! Write to President Barack Obama today and urge him to stand for pluralism, tolerance, and inclusiveness!

Taxation without Representation: Support the DC Voting Rights Act (HR 157)

Send a message to President Obama urging him to act swiftly on DC voting rights!

BACKGROUND

The DC Voting Rights Act is bipartisan legislation that would bring congressional voting representation to DC residents for the first time ever.

We have the votes to pass the DC Voting Rights Act early this year, but we need your help to reach out to the new administration. President Obama was supportive of DC voting rights but he indicated that it may not be a high priority. Let the President know that extending American democracy to DC residents is an issue of vital importance. Tell him to sign the DC Voting Rights Act into law as soon as it reaches his desk.

GLBT Equality: Support Equal Benefits for Same-Sex Partners in the State Department

Send a letter to Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton urging her to extend equal benefits to the same-sex partners of foreign policy workers.

Letters can be sent to:

Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20520

BACKGROUND

There are a range of benefits and rights granted to the spouses of State Department staff but which are denied to gay or lesbian partners. For example, same-sex partners are denied paid travel to and from overseas posts, visas and diplomatic passports, and mail privileges. Worse yet, they are even deprived of evacuation in case of a security emergency or medical necessity.

This is unacceptable. Gay and lesbian foreign policy workers shouldn't have to choose between their families and service to their country. It's absurd that the State Department will reimburse the cost of transporting a pet overseas but won't do likewise for a same-sex partner.

Many other nations already extend a partnership benefit. It's time that the United States caught up with the times. Write to Clinton today and urge her to ensure that equal benefits are extended to all foreign-policy couples.

Sensible Drug Policy: Urge President Obama to Halt Medical Marijuana Raids

Urge President Obama to order the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) to halt all raids on medical marijuana facilities.

BACKGROUND

Although during the campaign, then-Senator Barack Obama said, "I would not have the Justice Department prosecuting and raiding medical marijuana users," already the DEA has raided Holistic Solutions in South Lake Tahoe, stealing money and medical marijuana.

President Obama must live up to his promise and halt the raids. Even though the recent raid was likely due to a hold-over of DEA officials from the Bush Administration, Obama must take a stand and make sure such raids don't happen again on his watch.

Contacting Elected Officials

White House

Mailing Address

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

Phone Number

Comments: (202) 456-1111
Fax: (202) 456-2461

E-mail

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/contact>

Congress

Mailing Address

United States Senate
or
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Phone Number

Capitol Switchboard: (202) 224-3121

E-mail

Visit www.senate.gov or www.house.gov to use your representatives' e-mail contact forms.

American Ethical Union • 2 West 64th Street • New York, NY 10023
www.aeu.org

American Humanist Association • 1777 T Street, NW • Washington, DC 20009
www.americanhumanist.org

Editor: Karen Frantz (800) 837-3792
report@americanhumanist.org
rlkiniry@sbcglobal.net, report@aeu.org

To share your views on national legislation with the Secular Coalition for America (SCA) go to
www.secular.org.