



Ethical Action Report



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In this issue:

**The National Leaders Council of the American Ethical Union
Health Care Reform Statement of 2009**

**Reproductive Rights: Support a Permanent Repeal of the Global
Gag Rule**

**Separation of Church and State: Keep Civics Classes Historically
Accurate**

Civil Liberties: Stop Torture Now and Demand Accountability

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The National Leaders Council of the American Ethical Union Health Care Reform Statement of 2009

The National Leaders Council of the American Ethical Union supports current efforts to reform the health care system within the United States in order to provide affordable, effective and dependable health care for all. We reaffirm our historic position that "Health care is a right to which every man, woman and child is entitled."* Although the present proposed bills in Congress do not address all the issues of concern to us, we support President Obama's effort at creating a just and fair health care system. We expect that any national reform legislation would contain:

1. Availability of health care to all persons, regardless of age, ability to pay or pre-existing conditions.

2. Universal insurance coverage that would include preventative, diagnostic, therapeutic and rehabilitative services and mental care for as long as necessary.
3. Assurance of freedom of choice for patients and doctors and equality of price for all.

Nothing in such health care legislation should preclude the private practice of medicine or the private funding of medical care or research.

*AEU 1973 statement on health care <http://aeu.org/library/byresolution.php>

Reproductive Rights: Support a Permanent Repeal of the Global Gag Rule

Urge your senators to support a permanent repeal of the Global Gag Rule in the 2010 Foreign Operations appropriations bill.

BACKGROUND

On January 23, 2009, President Obama rescinded the Mexico City Policy, more commonly known as the Global Gag Rule. The policy banned U.S. family planning assistance for any non-government organization (NGO) that performed abortions (except in extreme cases), provided counseling and referral for abortion or even lobbied to make abortion legal or more available in their country—*even if the NGO used their own money to do so*.

The Global Gag Rule eroded family planning and reproductive health services in developing countries and limited free speech. President Obama was right to rescind the policy. However, the next president could easily reinstate it.

That's why we need Congress to step up to the plate and make sure we get rid of the Global Gag Rule for good. This fall the Senate will consider the 2010 Foreign Operations appropriations bill, which currently includes a permanent repeal of the Gag Rule.

Please urge your senators to support this measure and oppose any attempts to strip the permanent repeal from the bill.

Separation of Church and State: Keep Civics Classes Historically Accurate

Sign a petition to urge the Texas State Board of Education to provide an accurate and balanced account of our nation's tradition of separation of church and state and religious pluralism: http://salsa.democracyinaction.org/o/318/t/9133/petition.jsp?petition_KEY=2048 .

BACKGROUND

The Texas State Board of Education is currently revising the social studies curriculum for Texas public schools, and efforts are underway by some religious conservatives to push for a curriculum that would portray the founding of the United States as having “biblical motivations.”

The Texas social studies curriculum doesn’t just affect Texas children; it affects all public school children across the country. Texas has the second-largest school system in the United States, and many textbooks that are published and used by students across the country are written to meet Texas guidelines.

Please sign the American Humanist Association petition and urge the Texas State Board to maintain integrity in their social studies curriculum by providing an accurate and balanced account of our nation’s rich tradition of separation of church and state and religious pluralism. Sign the petition here:

http://salsa.democracyinaction.org/o/318/t/9133/petition.jsp?petition_KEY=2048 .

Civil Liberties: Stop Torture Now and Demand Accountability

Contact your member of Congress and urge them to close Guantanamo, end the military commissions permanently, reject indefinite detention and demand accountability for torture.

BACKGROUND

Military Commissions. Holding detainees indefinitely without charge. Reports indicate that these failed policies of the Bush Administration may be continued by President Obama, proving that it’s still as important as ever to stand up for basic human rights and civil liberties.

Moreover, in previous months rumors abounded that some members of Congress were drafting amendments that would halt Obama’s plans to close Guantanamo Bay by 2010, undercut efforts to hold those responsible for the torture program accountable and disregard habeas corpus by promoting indefinite detention without trial.

We need to make sure Congress hears our message loud and clear: the Bush-era policies that ran afoul of the U.S. Constitution and core American values cannot be tolerated in our society. Call Congress today!

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Visit www.senate.gov or www.house.gov
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www.secular.org.