



OFFICE OF  
GOVERNMENT  
RELATIONS



# Public Policy Resolutions and The Episcopal Church

February 24, 2022

# Ministry Beyond The Episcopal Church

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GLOBAL  
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The Episcopal Church Office of Government Relations represents the public policy priorities of the Episcopal Church to the government and policy community in Washington, D.C.

We aim to shape and influence policy and legislation on critical issues, highlighting the voices and experiences of Episcopalians and Anglicans globally.

All of our work is grounded in the resolutions of General Convention and Executive Council.



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# *Educate – Equip – Engage*

The Office of Government Relations manages the Episcopal Public Policy Network.

The EPPN is a **grassroots network of Episcopalians** who carry out the ministry of public policy advocacy.

EPPN members send action alerts, join weekly OGR briefings, and participate in advocacy.





*Why advocate to the government?*

# SCRIPTURE

“Speak out for those who cannot speak, for the rights of the destitute. Speak out, judge righteously, defend the rights of the poor and needy.”

*- Proverbs 31:8-9*





*Why advocate to the government?*

# SCALE

Federal government funding supports  
90% of all food assistance – from  
school meals to SNAP.



*Why advocate to the government?*

# AUTHORITY

- Immigration and Refugees
- Foreign Policy
- Environmental Regulation



**General Convention sets the policies of The Episcopal Church. The Office of Government Relations promotes and advocates for these policies to the U.S. government.**

***Your work matters!***



# How do we implement GC resolutions?

- Meetings with Congressional offices and White House
- Action Alerts, Resources, Webinars for EPPN members
- Letters, statements, and sign-ons to Congress and USG
- Public witness with coalition partners
- Corporate engagement and corporate social responsibility



# How do we implement resolutions?

## Urge Congress to Advance Study of Reparations

For the 17th consecutive Congressional session, a Member of Congress has introduced legislation that would establish a commission to study reparations. This legislation, introduced in the 117th Congress by Representative Sheila Jackson Lee, is known as the "[Commission to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African Americans Act](#)," or H.R. 40. In 2006, General Convention passed a [resolution](#) calling for "legislation initiating study of and dialogue about the history and legacy of slavery in the United States and of proposals for monetary and non-monetary reparations to the descendants of the victims of slavery." Since that time, The Episcopal Church has been supportive of this proposal, and we ask you to take action with us now to urge Congress to finally pass this bill into law.

In 2019, Bishop Eugene Sutton from the Diocese of Maryland testified before the House Judiciary Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights, and Civil

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- General Convention resolution directs OGR to take action
- OGR staff meet with sponsors of legislation, look to identify Congressional co-sponsors
- OGR sends action alert to the Episcopal Public Policy Network, including sample message to Congress and links to relevant GC resolutions to educate network

# Advocacy has an impact!

**60,895**

messages sent to Congress through the EPPN

**43**

Action Alerts sent to EPPN

**56**

Sign-on letters

## Behind the scenes

Relationships with White House staff, Congressional offices, career government officials and political appointees





*Statements of support from The Episcopal Church are read in the U.S. House of Representatives, the U.S. Senate, and shared by the White House.*



Members of the House of Representatives recently passed the Equality Act ([H.R. 5](#)) with 224 votes in favor. This bill is a piece of federal legislation that would for the first time include sexual orientation and gender identity alongside race, gender, religion, national origin, age, and disability as protected classes where federal law bans discrimination. The Equality Act passed in the House of Representatives in May 2019, but it never received a vote in the Senate. Write to your members of Congress and ask them to support this legislation today.

The Episcopal Church fully supports people of all sexual orientations and gender identities as children of God and recognizes their entitlement to full civil rights. In 2009, General Convention passed four resolutions supporting the lives and ministries of transgender people both within and outside the church, two of which urged support of transgender equality at the federal, state, and municipal levels. Convention has supported similar efforts to the Equality Act such as the Employment Non-Discrimination Act, which proposed including sexual orientation and gender identity-based protections in federal employment law ([GC 09](#)).

Last summer, Presiding Bishop Curry and President of the House of Deputies Jennings signed onto an [amicus brief](#) with other faith leaders and organizations for the Bostock v.

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## Rep. Mary Gay Scanlon (D-PA-05)

February 24, 2021 1:45PM ET

Automated Transcript for BGOV Floor Watch

Mr Speaker yesterday, the Rules Committee met and reported a rule H. Res. 147 Providing for consideration of H.R. 5 the Equality Act under a closed rule. The rule provides 90 minutes of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking member of the Committee on the judiciary and one motion to recommit. The rule also provides for consideration of H.R. 803, the Protecting America's wilderness and Public Lands Act under a structured rule.

The rule provides one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking member of the Committee on Natural Resources and self executes. A manager's amendment from Chairman Grover, it also makes in order 29 amendments provides on block authority to Chairman Garver and provides one motion to recommit. Mr. Speaker, we're here today to discuss, debate the rule for two critical pieces of legislation, H.R. 5, The Equality Act and H.R. 803, the Protecting America's wilderness and Public Lands Act. This an historic day for Congress and for equal rights over 45 years ago.

Congresswoman Bella as Button introduced the first version of the Equality Act, a bill that will provide full legal protections to the LGBTQ people. All the? All the Cross our country by extending the protections of the Civil Rights Act to them and making clear that we must respect, defend and celebrate the dignity innate of everyone in our communities including and perhaps especially those who are perceived as different or non binary. The version of the Equality Act that we consider today is the result of years of careful legislative drafting and amends is existing civil rights laws to provide protection from discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity in key areas of public life, employment, housing, credit education, public Spaces and services. Federally funded programs and jury service additionally the Equality Act updates the public spaces in services covered in current law to include retail stores and services such as banks, legal services and transportation.

These important updates will strengthen existing protections for everyone. The journey to this final version of the Equality Act was led by a dear colleague who is a history maker in his own right. Co-chair of the LGBTQ equality caucus and my colleague on the Judiciary Committee Congressman David Cicilline me from Rhode Island. Congressman Cicilline. He worked with lawyers and advocates from the left and the right religious groups and a host of civil rights groups to make sure the language of the Equality Act achieved full legal equality while protecting existing civil rights for other marginalized groups.

The resulting bill is supported by 130 of the largest employers in the country, our largest labor unions and hundreds of organizations, including to name just a few. The Leadership Conference for Civil and Human Rights, the NAACP, the National Women's Law Center, [the Episcopal Church](#), the Union for Reform Judaism and the United Church of Christ. And most importantly, it is supported by a clear and overwhelming majority of the American people. 71 percent of Americans support this legislation, including majorities of Democrats, Independents and Republicans. The clear majority of both the House and the American people recognize that for too long LGBTQ people have faced discrimination with no federal legal recourse.

It's beyond dispute that LGBTQ people, especially transgender people and even more so transgender women of color face discrimination across this country. To echo other speakers, this issue is deeply personal for me, it's Ben's personal since my baby sister came out to me almost 40 years ago for many people all across this country and across this house. That is when this fight hits home, it gets personal.

When someone who you love says this who I am, it gets personal when you know and value that person and you want to do



# Payday Lending

2012-A081:

“Creating stricter usury laws and regulations that establish the principles of fair loan structures, fair repayment schedules, and interest rates such that debts can be repaid in a timely manner without crushing the debtor”



**Faith for Just Lending**  
a call to end predatory payday lending

May 13, 2019

The Honorable Kathleen Kraninger  
Director, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau  
1700 G Street, NW Washington, DC 20552

**RE: Comments on Proposal to Rescind Ability-to-Repay Requirements Governing Payday, Vehicle Title, and Certain High-Cost Installment Loans, Docket No. CFPB-2019-0006; RIN 3170-AA80**

Dear Director Kraninger:

The Faith for Just Lending coalition respectfully submits the following comment in response to the above-referenced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking. In 2017, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau finalized new rules to curb predatory payday and car title lending practices and we supported the finalized rule. Faith for Just Lending represents millions of Christians in the United States, from a wide range of denominations and traditions, and we are united in our desire to see predatory lending practices ended. Scripture teaches us to respect the God-given dignity of every person. Exploiting the economic hardship of our neighbors is sinful.

We support the finalized Rule on Payday, Vehicle Title, and Certain High-Cost Installment Loans which sought to protect vulnerable individuals and families in times of financial crisis from debt traps designed around their inability--as opposed to ability--to repay their loan. Requiring a lender to make a determination of a borrower's ability to repay is a longstanding

# The Child Tax Credit

- 2018-C041: Advocate for Policies Supporting Nutrition, Healthcare, and Housing as Human Rights
- American Rescue Plan CTC Expansion
- Advocacy Continues



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THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

August 23, 2021

The Episcopal Church  
Washington, D.C.

Dear Friends,

Thank you for your contributions during our Month of Action to get our friends, neighbors, and loved ones vaccinated and protected against the deadly coronavirus. Together, we are making progress in our collective fight against COVID-19 and getting our Nation back on track—but there is still a lot work ahead of us.

This past year has been one of the most painful years in American history. With more than 628,000 American lives lost due to COVID-19, helping get more people vaccinated is among the most important things any of us can do right now. We need your continued support more than ever. Your efforts are not just saving lives—they are helping us get our lives back. United as one Nation, we can get through this pandemic and usher in a healthier and more hopeful future.

Keep the faith,

# *Peace in South Sudan*

## *Res. 2015-B018:*

Directs DFMS "to utilize all measures at their disposal to advocate for the protection of refugees, conflict resolution and sustainable development in South Sudan and Sudan with appropriate governmental and international agencies and offices."

- **OGR arranged meetings for Archbishop Justin Badi meetings in Congress and Department of State. New legislation was introduced following these meetings.**

# Cuba

- *Res. 2012-A020: Advocate Ending Travel Restrictions, Isolation, and Embargo Against Cuba*
- *Res. 2009-A034: Urge Advocacy and Prayer to End to the US Embargo of Cuba*

## Tell Congress to lift the U.S. Embargo on Cuba

The Episcopal Church has long called for both a [restoration of diplomatic relations](#) and an [end to the United States embargo against Cuba](#), particularly provisions that hamper the mission of the Church in Cuba. The historically bipartisan [United States-Cuba Trade Act of 2021](#) would lift this embargo to allow for normal trade relations with the island nation. We ask that you join us in asking your Senators to support this legislation.

While advocating for normalized relationships, The Episcopal Church prioritizes human rights, freedom of speech and movement, and [freedom of political prisoners](#). Engagement can be an effective strategy to advance the cause of [human rights, political liberty](#), and supporting the Cuban people. The United States and Cuba began dialogues concerning human rights when the Obama Administration introduced new engagement policy in 2014. This legislation also allowed for negotiations between the two governments that resulted in the [release of 53 political prisoners](#), a small but meaningful step.



# Global Health

Res. 2003-D058:

"...call on the United States government to honor and support trade policies that promote access to essential AIDS medicines for poor countries, and to make sustained commitment for a fair-share U.S. contribution to the "Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB, and Malaria"

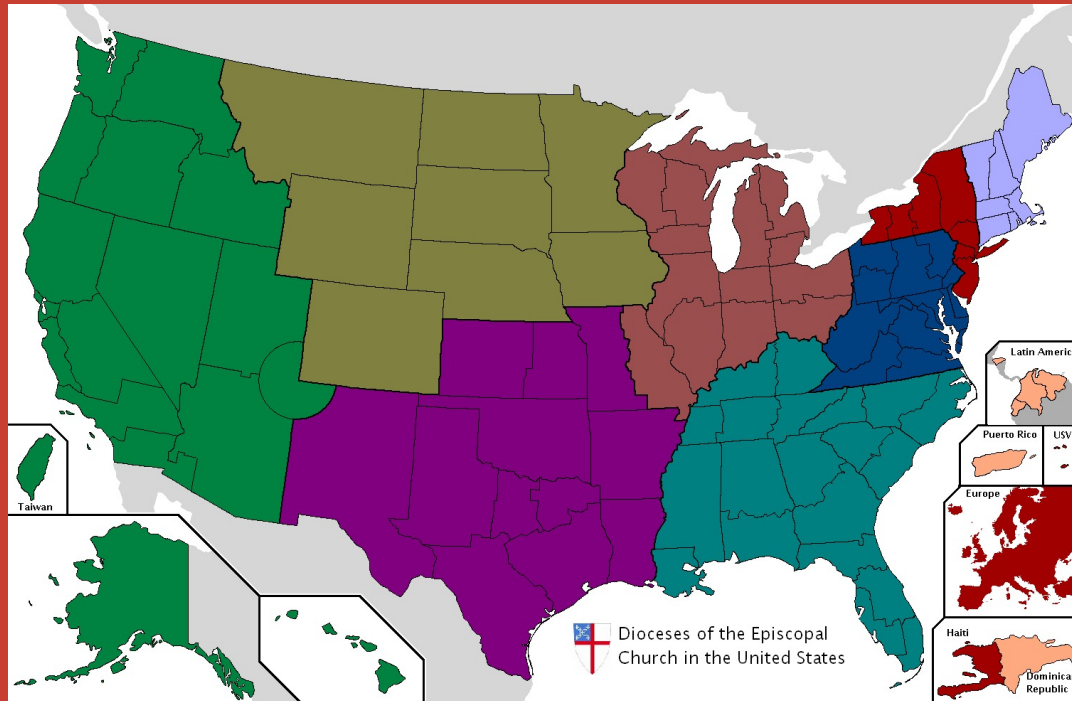
EXC062020.07: Recognition of the Global Implications of COVID-19 Pandemic



# Developing Resources for Advocacy



# Why focus on the United States?



- U.S. Policy has global impact
- Constitutional right to petition the government
- Congress responsive to constituent priorities
- White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships




## *What can you do?*

- Familiarize yourself with General Convention Resolutions
- Learn more about advocacy asks and legislation
- Make sure you are asking the right entity to carry out the right action, or don't specify



# General Convention Resolutions



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## The Acts of Convention

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94 resolutions were found matching the query conditions.

Resolution Number	Title	Legislative Action Taken	Abstract
<a href="#">2018-A011</a>	Affirm Commitment to Address Environmental Racism	Concurred as Substituted	The 79th General Convention reaffirms the church's commitment to a safe and healthy environment and authorizes a task force to recommend remedies to address governmental policies affecting community health and environment.
<a href="#">2018-A178</a>	Denounce Inhumane Immigration Policies and Advocate on Behalf of Migrants	Concurred	The 79th General Convention calls for a halt to punitive, inhumane, and unjust policies and practices by the U.S. government in its treatment of immigrants, especially women, parents, children and others with special needs, and urges advocacy for addressing vulnerable migrants.
<a href="#">2018-A286</a>	Condemn Discharge of Non-Citizens from Military	Concurred as Amended	The 79th General Convention condemns the discharge of non-citizens from voluntary service in the US Armed Forces, and urges the government to honor its commitments to immigrant veterans.
<a href="#">2018-B005</a>	Advocate for Study of Gun Violence as a Public Health	Concurred as Amended	The 79th General Convention recognizes gun violence as a public



# Goldilocks Resolutions

## Too Broad

1985-D040

**Request the Church and Individual Members to Work for Peace**

“...Influence government leaders and producers of military technology and hardware to examine their moral and social responsibility;

## Too Specific

1991-D124

**Support Reauthorization of the Endangered Species Act in 1991**

*Resolved*, That the 70th General Convention of the Episcopal Church support the reauthorization of the Endangered Species Act by the Congress in 1991;

## Just Right

2009-D048

**Urge Passage of a Universal Health Care Program**

“That the General Convention direct the Office of Government Relations to assess, negotiate and deliberate the range of proposed federal health care policy options in the effort to reach the goal of universal health care coverage, and to pursue short-term, incremental, innovative and creative approaches to universal health care until a ‘single payer’ universal health care program is established”

## What Resolutions Should Do

- Statement of values
- Set a goal
- Means to achieving the goal
- Support for incremental changes in direction of the goal

For example:

TEC supports self-driving cars  
Goal: 100% of cars will be self-driving by 2050

Means: Direct OGR to advocate for legislation and regulations to promote self-driving cars

Include incremental changes: advocate for policies that will increase percentage of self-driving cars even if it falls short of 100%

# Thank you!

- Join the Episcopal Public Policy Network
- Follow the EPPN on social media:  
   **@TheEPPN**
- Visit our website:  
[www.episcopalchurch.org/ogr](http://www.episcopalchurch.org/ogr)
- Contact the Office of Government Relations:  
[eppn@episcopalchurch.org](mailto:eppn@episcopalchurch.org)

