



300 Ohio Faith Leaders Sign Petition Demanding Ohio Lawmakers Protect Democracy

To: Senate President Matt Huffman and House Speaker Bob Cupp

Religious and civil liberties are in grave danger in the state of Ohio. As people of conscience and people of faith, we cannot stay silent in the face of the worst existential threat to First Amendment freedoms in our state's history.

Our legislature has introduced bills designed to discourage public witness, protest and dissent. Laws that would criminalize churches and nonprofits that engage in public witness have been proposed alongside restrictions that will make it harder to vote.

In the midst of a once-in-a-generation pandemic, while our state strains under decades of underinvestment in social programs, infrastructure and essential worker protections, the Ohio Legislature spent its time targeting speech conservative lawmakers do not like. Legislators are promoting a crackdown on voices that speak truth to power, aspiring to stifle any people-driven effort to hold Ohio's public servants accountable.

This portfolio of anti-democracy bills betrays a very clear racial bias. Limiting voter rights, stifling dissent, criminalizing protest, and punishing faith communities that participate in public witness of their moral convictions will disproportionately harm Black and Brown communities, and organizations.

We declare that Ohio will never bow to totalitarian pressures that seek to disenfranchise voters and eliminate morally-motivated dissent.

God has a burning desire for justice. Some say that the burning bush described in the book of Exodus is actually representative of this divine yearning, the burning that is in the heart of God for justice for all of God's people. Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King understood this when he wrote "It is God's desire for justice that makes the struggle for justice and freedom holy ground." We are standing on holy ground and we are burning for justice. We will not be silent, because the fire of commitment within us will not let us.

Signed,

Organizational Signers

Community Organizing Center

Faith in Public Life

First Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbus

Heartland Conference of the United Church of Christ

North Unitarian Universalist Congregation

Ohio Religious Coalition for Reproductive Rights

Ohio Voter Rights Coalition

Phillips Temple CME Church

Religions for Peace USA

The Faith Movement - Ohio

The Freedom BLOC

The Ohio Council of Churches

Unitarian Universalist Justice Ohio

United Methodist Church for All People

Individual Signers (Prominent leaders first)

Rev.	Jennifer	Butler
Rev. Dr.	Tim	Ahrens
Min.	Blyth	Barnow
Rev.	Glen	Bengson
Rev.	Myron	Boswell
	Chazidy	Bowman
Rev.	Lynn	Bozich Shetzer
Dr.	Valerie	Bridgeman
Rev.	Andy	Burns
Rev.	Andy	Call
Rev.	Dan	Clark
	Alexander	Clemetson
Rev.	Alan	Fortnoff
Rev.	Raymond	Greene
	Kim	Hairston
Dr.	Katelin	Hansen
Sr.	Karen	Hartman
Sr.	Kathleen	Hebbeler
Rev.	Gregory	Henneman
Sr.	Yuliya	Kotova
Pastor	Joshua	Lawson
Rev.	Meg	Mathieson
Sr.	Roberta	Miller
Rev.	Joel	Miller
Rev.	Deniray	Mueller
Sr.	Marjorie	Niemer
Rabbi	Jonathan	Perlman
	Patricia	Perry
Rev. Dr.	Charles	Peterson
	Elaina	Ramsey
Rev.	Lee	Reat
Rev.	Dave	Shull

Pastor	Brandi	Slaughter
Rev.	Lynda	Smith
Rev. Dr.	Susan	Smith
Rev. Dr.	Jack	Sullivan, Jr.
Sr.	Sheilamarie	Tobbe
Rev.	Rebecca	Tollefson
Rev.	Joan	VanBecelaere
Sr.	Catherine	Walsh
Rev.	Terry	Williams
	Camille	Wimbish

Individual Signers (continued)

Mr.	Dennis	Adkins
Mrs.	Cathy	Adler
	Lee	Alban
Ms.	Laurie	Albright
	Elizabeth	Aldrich
	Janet	Allt
	Barbara	Altenburg
	Bert	Ambrose
	Jessica	Armstrong
Mr.	Roger	Auer
Ms.	Marybeth	Auletto
	Chantal Elizabeth	Bailey
Ms.	Kathleen	Baka
Ms.	Joanne	Barger
	Blyth	Barnow
	Constance	Barnow
	Isaac	Bean
	Robert	Bemer
	Gloria	Bemer
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	Meg	Bennett
Rev. Dr.	Elyse	Berry
	Teresa	Betts-Cobau
Rev.	Rev Gerald	Bishop

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	Julie	Boetger
Mr.	Richard	Boyce
Ms.	Kathleen	Bradley
Ms.	Diane	Brobeck
Ms.	Leslie	Buck
	Russell	Buckbee
	Peggy	Burke
	Katharine	Burnett
	Elizabeth	Butler
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	Katherine	Campbell-Gaston
	Carol	Carlin
	Anne	Caruso
	James Dae Jaang	Casebolt
Mr.	Mark	Chudzik
	Jane	Clark
	Margaret	Clark
Dr.	Richard	Clark
	Ursula	Cohrs
Mrs.	Laura	Colston
Mr.	Elliot	Comunale
	Jillian	Cook
	Colette	Cordova
	Rachel	Costanzo
	Mary	Counter
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	Martha	Davenport
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	Sharon	Dittmar
	Jean	Dowell
	Robert	Drake
	Kelly	Dreyer
	Frank	Echelmeyer
Mr.	David R.	Eckman

	Youssef	Elzein
	Michael	Englehart
Mr.	Michael	Erskine
	Darryl	Fairchild
	Dorothy	Faller
Ms.	Ruth	Farthing
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	Paul	Flament
	David	Fleming
	Joanne	Frania
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	Adam	Glass
	Richard	Glass
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	Virginia	Gottman
	Joan	Grace
	Jeannine	Greenlee
	Joseph	Grove
	Margaret	Hale
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	Michelle	Harper Kowalczyk
Ms.	Mackenzie	Harris
Mrs.	Jeanne	Haseley
	Barbara	Haxton
Ms.	Myra K	Hayduk
	Jean	Henderson
	Jennifer	Hill
	Sarah	Hinton
	Kimberly	Hoffman
Mrs.	Mary	Hood
Rev.	Carolyn	Horvath
	Tom	Leonhardt
	Heidi	Howes
Ms.	Tiffany	Hunsinger
	Monica	Hymer

Rev.	Paula	Jackson
	Randall	Johnson
Rev.	Christine	Jones-Leavy
	Nicole	Jonsson
Mrs.	Marilyn	Kamp
Rev.	Kellie	Kelly
Ms.	Jan	Kennedy
	Susan	Kenney
Mrs.	Loretta	Kerns
	Deborah	Kline
	Thomas	Knowles
	Sara	Koopman
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	Marsha	Krob
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	Deborah	Lichtenberger
Ms.	Sandy	Lindahl
Ms.	Karen	Linn
	Hopeanne	Lovrinoff-Moran
	Michele	Luebbers
Mr.	Chuck	Lynd
Rev.	Anthony	Makar
Ms.	Ruthmary	Mangan
	Janice Marie	Mappin Echols
Ms.	Patricia	Marida
Mr.	George	Marsh
	Laurie	Marshall
	Mary	Mason
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	Tom	Mcdonald
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Mrs.	Ann C	McGill
	Karen	McGuire
	Betty	McVey
	Wilbur	Miller
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	Janet	Nabring-Stager
	Steven	Nash

	Jim	Naughton
Ms.	Meghann	Naveau
	Jan	Nespor
	Linda	New
Mrs.	Barbara	Newman
	Carolyn	Nieset
Rev.	Jim	Nolan
	Sandye	Norris
	Marilyn	O'Connor
Ms.	Diane	Obringer
Ms.	Maureen	OMeara
	Kevin	Orr
	Anne	Osborne
	Klittie	Palm-Houser
	Olivette	Palmer
Mrs.	Phyllis	Park
Ms.	Ann	Patella
Ms.	Pat	Patterson
Mrs.	Laurel	Peters
	John	Pettigrew
Mr.	Don	Pew
Mr.	Justin	Philipps
	Janna	Piper
	Judith	Pishitelli
	Lynn	Pooley
Mrs.	Linda	Purkey
	Catherine	Queener
Mr.	Rich	Rastetter
	Stephanie	Renny
Ms.	Stephanie	Riccobene
Dr.	Susan	Righi
Mr.	Charles	Rihm
	Catherine	Ross
	Courtney	Rowland
Mrs.	Laura	Rushton
	Carla	Rutter
	Lisa	Ryan
	Abigail	Salyers
	Cindy	Schmidt

	Donna	Schneider
	Bruce	Schutrum
	Cynthia	Seman
	Ruth	Sewell
	Thomas	Sheehan
	Paul	Sherry
Rev. Dr.	Mary	Shields
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	Victoria	Slabinski
	Gaylene	Sloane
	Timothy	Smith
	Kia	Smith
	Jay	Smithmeyer
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	Katie	Steele
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	Benjamin	Stevens
	Elaine	Strawn
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	Sue	Stromberg
	Kathy	Swensen
	Al	Tague
	Emma	Thaci
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	Patricia	Tietz
	Madeleine	Trichel
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	Debra	Tucker
Rev.	Robert	Turner
Rev.	Michael	Tynan
	Norma	Tynan
Ms.	Abby	Vaile
	Carmen	Vernon
Mr.	Aloysius	Wald
	Jessica	Watkins

	Sue	Watson
Mr.	Harold	Watson
	Carolyn	West
	Martha	Wiersma
	Chris	Wilds
Mr.	Greg	Williams
	Seth	Williams
	Tom	Williams
	Tim	Wood
	Dwight	Woodward
	Gary	Zabukovec
Ms.	Mary	Zack
Mr.	Gary	Zahler
	Mary	Zahler