



# DEMOCRATIC FAITH WORKING GROUP

November /December 2019

Volume 1

# FAITH MATTERS

*Bridging the gap between Faith and Politics*

## ABOUT DFWG

The Democratic Faith Working Group (DFWG) works to help House Democrats find common ground on issues of faith and connect with people of diverse religious backgrounds.

The DFWG periodically sponsors forums, roundtables, briefings and other events to educate, promote and—most importantly—connect with faith voters. We often host faith leaders to discuss and develop ways to address the admonitions of Micah 6:8 and Matthew 25:45.

In recent Congresses we successfully navigated through some pretty thorny issues; one of which was the drafting, debating and passage of the Affordable Care Act (ACA). Upon its passage, we worked with the faith community to implement the ACA through our “Souls2Enroll Outreach.” We are working to protect SNAP—the food stamp program—and rescind Trump’s recent Tax Hikes on Places of Worship and Charities.



Our partners in this journey include the Episcopal Church, the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism, Sojourners, the Skinner Leadership Institute, the Presbyterian Church, NETWORK Lobby, American Baptist Home Mission Societies, Friends Committee of Legislation, Soka Gakkai International-USA, the Progressive Baptist National Convention and the National Council of Churches.

This newsletter is an effort to keep Caucus members informed of DFWG’s activities. Members are invited and encouraged to join DFWG in its efforts to bridge the divides that sometimes develop between faith community leaders and Democratic elected officials. If you have any questions or suggestions about our activities, please contact Tamika Mason at [Tamika.Mason@mail.house.gov](mailto:Tamika.Mason@mail.house.gov) or x6-3210.

## MEMBER(S) SPOTLIGHT(S)

On November 1, 2019, Representatives Dan Kildee and Dwight Evans participated in a call for Congressional staff on the importance of the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and the Child Tax Credit (CTC) to families across the country. The call was put together by Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, NETWORK Lobby, RESULTS, UnidosUS, and the Coalition on Human Needs.

With over 30 offices registered for the call, including Speaker Pelosi's office and the Democratic Policy Caucus, it outlined the need for action to increase the EITC and CTC. These two credits will make a big difference in the lives of millions of working families throughout the country. H.R. 3157, the Working Families Tax Relief Act, sponsored by Representatives Kildee and Evans, will raise the incomes of 46 million households by increasing both the EITC and CTC.

## THOUGHTS FROM THE FAITH COMMUNITY...

Buddhism teaches, "If you light a lantern for another, it will also brighten your own way." Please be confident that the higher your flame of altruistic action burns, the more its light will suffuse your life with happiness. Those who possess an altruistic spirit are the happiest people of all. ~ **Daisaku Ikeda, President, Soka Gakkai International**

"We are called to share what we have with those in need, and we are challenged to work for a justice that ends the income and wealth gap. We must remember that 'We the People' can create federal policies that ensure children don't go hungry; that a parent can care for a sick child without losing their job; and that immigrant families remain together." ~ **Sister Simone Campbell, SSS, Executive Director NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice**

As humanitarians, we recognize the importance of assisting and serving vulnerable populations year round. However, during the holiday season, we are acutely reminded of our many blessings and the tremendous duty we carry to share those blessings with those around us. Through sustained and dignified assistance, we fulfill our faith-inspired and moral obligation to humanity to ensure that basic needs are met and barriers are removed to allow every individual the ability to maintain a healthy, secure and sustainable livelihood within their community. ~ **Sharif Aly, CEO at Islamic Relief USA**

Each and every day, people in need can count on others for help with food, clothing, and shelter. The kindness of people in churches and neighborhoods across the United States, coupled with federal programs that provide vital funding for social services, make our communities stronger. Considering the many blessings we have, assuring that people in need receive vital help is one other way we can foster kindness and love. ~ **Diane Randall, Executive Secretary, Friends Committee on National Legislation**

## UPCOMING DATES IN THE FAITH COMMUNITY

- ◆ Nov. 24th—Martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur
- ◆ Nov. 26th—Christ the King
- ◆ Nov. 26th—Day of the Covenant
- ◆ Nov. 28th—Thanksgiving
- ◆ Nov. 28th—Ascension of 'Abdu'l-Baha
- ◆ Nov. 30th—St. Andrew's Day
- ◆ Dec. 1st—Advent
- ◆ Dec. 6th—St. Nicholas Day
- ◆ Dec. 8th—Gita Jayanti
- ◆ Dec. 8th—Bodhi Day
- ◆ Dec. 16th—Dhanu Sankranti
- ◆ Dec. 22nd—Hanukkah Begins
- ◆ Dec. 24th—Christmas Eve
- ◆ Dec. 25th—Christmas
- ◆ Dec. 26th—Kwanzaa Begins
- ◆ Dec. 28th—Holy Innocents
- ◆ Dec. 30th—Hanukkah Ends
- ◆ Dec. 31st—New Year's Eve