

[Your Name
and Address]

[Date]

The Honorable [Name of Representative]
United States House of Representatives
[Office Location] House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

OR The Honorable [Name of Senator]
United State Senate
[Office Location] Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear [Congressman or Senator _____]:

On behalf of the [Name of church and school], which is a member of the Old Dominion Association of Church Schools, I wish to express my concern over the longstanding law known as the Johnson Amendment. Passed in 1954, The Johnson Amendment prohibits non-profit and tax-exempt organizations from engaging in political campaigning; however, the result has been a stifling of political speech by pastors and religious organizations. I am thankful that the President recently signed an executive order taking steps to begin a repeal by instructing the Secretary of the Treasury to alleviate the burden of the amendment. However, I believe that legislation is necessary to ensure a permanent repeal that cannot be rolled back by a future administration that may not share the same desire to protect religious freedom and free speech.

In an effort to accomplish this goal, Representatives Steve Scalise and Jody Hice have introduced H.R. 781, known as the Free Speech Fairness Act. This bill would amend the IRS code to allow tax-exempt organizations to make political statements regarding a candidate for public office without penalty from the federal government. The bill does not provide a full repeal of the Johnson Amendment in that it still prevents tax-exempt entities from abusing their tax status by directly financing a political candidate or paid advertisements. Rather than a full repeal, the language fixes the burdensome portion of the Johnson Amendment which limits freedom of speech for pastors, church leaders, and leaders of non-profit organizations classified as 501(c)(3). The Senate companion bill, S. 264, has been introduced by Senator James Lankford.

I urge you to support the Free Speech Fairness Act in order to protect and reaffirm the constitutional right of free speech of all Americans. Thank you for your service to our state and to our nation, and thank you for taking time to consider my request.

Sincerely,

[Name]
[Title]