

**CIVIC GUIDELINES FOR PASTORS & CHURCHES**  
By Mathew D. Staver, Esq., Liberty Counsel Founder & Chairman

<b>SUPPORTING OR OPPOSING CANDIDATES / APPOINTMENTS</b>	<b>CHURCH</b>	<b>Individual PASTORS</b>
Endorsing or opposing political candidates	NO	YES
Contributions to political candidate	NO	YES
In-kind and independent expenditures for or against political candidates	NO	YES
Contributions to Political Action Committees	NO	YES
<b>APPEARANCE OF POLITICAL CANDIDATE AT CHURCH MEETING / SERVICE</b>	<b>YES</b>	N/A
<b>INTRODUCTION OF POLITICAL CANDIDATES AT CHURCH</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>
Political candidate to preach or read scripture (contributions should not be solicited & message should not urge people to vote for the candidate)	YES	N/A
<b>VOTER REGISTRATION PROGRAMS AND CAMPAIGNS (non-partisan)</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>
<b>DISTRIBUTE CANDIDATE SURVEYS / INCUMBENT VOTING RECORDS (avoid editorial opinions)</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>
<b>DISTRIBUTION IN CHURCH PARKING LOT OF POLITICAL STATEMENTS AND OPINIONS ON POLITICAL ISSUES (so long as no church endorsement)</b>	<b>YES</b>	N/A
<b>RENT OR LOAN CHURCH MAILING LISTS TO POLITICAL CANDIDATES (list must be made available to all candidates on similar terms and prices)</b>	<b>YES</b>	N/A
<b>CHURCH BULLETIN NEWS STORIES / POLITICAL ADS AT REGULAR PRICE</b>	<b>YES</b>	N/A
Church bulletin editorial where the pastor or staff member endorses or opposes a candidate	NO	NO
Church bulletin editorial regarding political issues or two different church members take opposing views on a candidate	YES	N/A
<b>USE OF CHURCH FACILITIES BY POLITICAL CANDIDATES (if all candidates are allowed or invited)</b>	<b>YES</b>	N/A
Fund-raising for candidates	NO	YES
Campaigning for candidates	NO	YES
<b>EDUCATE MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ABOUT VIEWPOINTS OF CANDIDATES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>
<b>DISCUSS CHURCH DOCTRINE PERTAINING TO CANDIDATE VIEWS</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>
Granting use of name to support a political candidate	NO*	YES*
<b>SUPPORT / OPPOSE JUDICIAL, DEPARTMENT OR CABINET APPOINTMENTS</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>
Support or oppose judicial candidates	NO	YES
<b>SUPPORT / OPPOSE POLITICAL APPOINTMENTS OF NON-ELECTED OFFICIALS</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>
<b>SUPPORTING OR OPPOSING LEGISLATION</b>	<b>CHURCH</b>	<b>Individual PASTORS</b>
Use of church facilities by lobbying groups to discuss social issues	YES	N/A
Rent or loan church mailing list to lobbying groups	YES	N/A
Preach sermons on social issues and political issues and activism	YES	YES
Educate on political process and political/social/legislative issues	YES	YES
Petition drives supporting or opposing legislation	YES	YES
Support or oppose legislation unrelated to the church organization	YES**	YES
Support or oppose legislation that directly relates to the organization	YES***	YES
Encourage members to voice their opinions in favor or in opposition to certain legislation	YES**	YES
Lobby candidates to support or oppose legislation	YES**	YES
Distribute position papers supporting or opposing legislation	YES**	YES

\*A pastor may include title and church affiliation in a personal endorsement along with the following notation: "Title and affiliation for identification purposes." \*\*Churches and other 501(c)3 organizations may support or oppose legislation so long as such activity comprises an insubstantial part of the overall operation. A 501(c)4 organization may support or oppose legislation without any limitations. \*\*\*A church or any other 501(c)3 organization may without limitation support or oppose legislation that directly affects the organizational structure and operation of the organization. For example, a church may without limitation oppose legislation attempting to repeal the tax-exempt status of the church. Copyright © 2000-2004. Resource: Liberty Counsel: [http://www.lc.org/Resources/pastors\\_churches\\_politics.htm](http://www.lc.org/Resources/pastors_churches_politics.htm). Mailing address: PO Box 540774, Orlando, FL 32854. On the web at <http://www.lc.org/>.