

Influential Evangelical Group Marks Top Issues for Congress to Tackle

In a recent survey conducted with thousands of its constituents, nonpartisan organization My Faith Votes has identified the top issues Christians want Congress to focus on as senators and representatives return to session this September.

Among the top priorities identified by Christians—which include tax reform, repealing the Affordable Care Act and approving funding for Hurricane Harvey relief—is setting term limits for members of Congress, an issue that’s quickly gaining traction among conservative voters as midterm elections loom around the corner.

“What we’ve found through these surveys is that what matters most to Christians, perhaps even more than any specific legislative item, is that Congress be held accountable,” said Jason Yates, CEO of My Faith Votes. “Christians want to see Congress do its job and fulfill its promises to the American people, whether this means finally finding a solution to America’s broken health care system or implementing tax reform. And if members of Congress are not meeting their expectations, they want measures in place, chief of which are term limits, so the representatives and senators who are obstructing the due process of lawmaking can be held accountable.”

In terms of pending legislative measures, My Faith Votes found that approving tax reform—to simplify and reduce taxes—and repealing and replacing the Affordable Care Act are two items of particular concern to Christian constituents. The importance of addressing both issues has been stressed by

President Trump's administration, though Congress has yet to succeed in passing a legislative measure on either.

To keep Congress accountable, My Faith Votes recently launched a new campaign called "Congress Live Like Us." The campaign informs Christian voters about some of the lesser-known reasons behind the gridlock in Congress.

One recent initiative of the "Congress Live Like Us" campaign was the release of a video exposing an obscure subsidy, implemented by the Obama administration, that allows members of Congress to purchase insurance at a steeply discounted rate. The video has received nearly 50,000 views and has elicited a strong response from many of My Faith Votes constituents who are struggling to cover their health care costs.

"Here's the truth: the Affordable Care Act doesn't affect Congress," says Audrea Decker, My Faith Votes Director of Communications, in the video. "Their health insurance is subsidized by a special congressional exemption that covers $\frac{3}{4}$ of their premium."

"They aren't feeling the pain of other Americans who have to purchase health insurance without the help of a company or government subsidy," Decker says. "Congress is not living like the people they serve."

My Faith Votes plans to implement similar constituent-based initiatives as health care, tax reform, judicial nominations and immigration reform are argued in Congress. The organization—which played a major role in mobilizing Christians to vote in the 2016 presidential election—will continue its mission of encouraging and equipping American Christians to participate in local and national elections.

"In the upcoming months Congress is in session and leading up to next year's midterm elections, My Faith Votes will continue to keep Congress accountable and voters informed," added

Yates. “We want to help every Christian to think critically, pray fervently and vote faithfully in every election and to equip faith communities across America to boldly participate in the public square.” {eo}

My Faith Votes—whose founding honorary national chairman was Dr. Ben Carson—is a non-partisan movement focused on motivating Christians in America to participate in local and domestic elections and be active members of society. By partnering with local churches, pastors and national faith leaders, My Faith Votes mobilizes and resources Christians to lead the conversation on the place of faith in culture and politics.