

Statement for the Record

In Support of H.R. 1, For the People Act of 2019

On behalf of the Franciscan Action Network

January 29, 2019

Submitted to the House Committee on the Judiciary

Dear Chairman Nadler, Ranking Member Collins, and Members of the Committee,

Inspired by the Gospel of Jesus, and the example of Saints Francis and Clare, the Franciscan Action Network (FAN) is a collective Franciscan voice seeking to transform United States public policy related to peace making, care for creation, poverty, and human rights. We are an advocacy voice for over 50 different Franciscan institutions across the United States.

The Franciscan Action Network sees the interconnectedness of all creation and the common origin of humanity as rooted in God's loving design for the earth and all people. Recognizing this fundamental goodness of God through the act of creation, FAN counters the social sinfulness that persistently compromises God's hopes, through a clarion call to conversion. It is through continual conversion that the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor can be heard in their authenticity and understood in a way that leads us to re-discover our original goodness, both personally and collectively. Through this process of continual conversion, we discover ourselves as co-creators, with God and others, thereby realizing a world where people and plant cherish a common inherent dignity, encourage social goodness, and live in just prosperity.

With this vision in mind, FAN has taken the lead on an interfaith coalition, "Faithful Democracy" looking at the issue of money in politics. The coalition looks at this issue from both a faith and legislative perspective, using the issues of the environment, gun violence prevention, and immigration/private prisons as catalysts.

The Gospel of Matthew tells us that we must not serve God and money. It is imperative that for a fully functioning and representative government of all Americans that we institute reforms in the areas of campaign finance, voting rights, and good governance. As Pope Francis reminds us to "meddle in politics" we're reminded that that means that all Americans must have an equal say in the public square.

Our faith teaches us that we must recognize each person as a gift from God, and that we must emphasize the importance of the essential humanity and dignity of each person.

We know that we cannot fix the issues that we advocate with those on the margins such as poverty, immigration, the environment, and gun violence until we fix our democracy.

Therefore, we call on the House of Representatives pass HR1 without delay or obstruction.

HR1 is an essential reform for our democracy that will help to ensure that all Americans have an equal say in our government. As advocates for justice we applaud HR1 and look forward to its passage.

Sincerely,

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