



Advocacy Update

Sent October 10, 2012

Faiths United to Prevent Gun Violence

Over the past year, gun control has once again been at the forefront of North American political discourse, spurred in large part by the shooting of Florida's Trayvon Martin, the summer shootings in Toronto's Eaton Centre and at a community block party, the massacre at a movie theatre in Aurora, Colorado, and the tragic shooting at the Sikh Temple in Oak Creek, Wisconsin. Every day in the United States, 300 people—including 65 children and teenagers—are injured or killed with guns.

To combat these startling statistics, Women of Reform Judaism has become a proud member of the Faiths United to Prevent Gun Violence coalition. WRJ has joined a list of over 30 organizations committed to reducing death and injury from gunfire and endorsing comprehensive and effective public policy measures to achieve this important goal. WRJ has advocated for responsible gun control for many years, and is looking forward to this opportunity to become more engaged on this issue.

Health Care for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals

On June 15, 2012, President Obama made an exciting announcement for immigrants and immigration advocates: his administration would not deport students who had been eligible for the failed DREAM Act. This was a major step forward for these vulnerable youth, and was very much in line with WRJ immigration policy. Unfortunately, however, Obama has refused to extend to these individuals the benefits provided under the Affordable Care Act, including crucial programs such as Medicaid and CHIP.

WRJ strongly opposes this policy, and signed onto a letter sent both to President Obama and to Secretary Sebelius of the Department of Health and Human Services urging the administration to reconsider its position. To make your voice heard and submit your own opinions, [click here](#) and submit a comment!

Protecting Comprehensive Sex Education in Sequestration

As a result of the Budget Control Act of 2011, across-the-board federal funding cuts, or "sequestration," will go into effect beginning January 2, 2013 unless Congress reaches an agreement to balance the budget. All nondefense discretionary (NDD) programs will suffer serious cuts, including sex education funding. In particular, three key programs—the Teen Pregnancy Prevention Initiative (TPPI), the Division of Adolescent School Health (DASH) within the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the Personal Responsibility Education Program (PREP)—would see significant drops in their funding.

WRJ joined a number of organizations in the battle to protect comprehensive sex education funding by signing onto a letter being distributed throughout Congress, and by lobbying members on the Hill. As the letter we signed reminds us, "time and time again, research has demonstrated that well-designed and well-implemented HIV, STD, and pregnancy prevention programs can decrease sexual risk behaviors among young people... yet, every fiscal year poses new battles over funding for these programs..." WRJ is doing everything it can to protect these educational programs crucial to women's health and well-being.

For more information on WRJ and Social Justice, visit www.wrj.org/social-justice-home