

**UUSJ Committee and Task Group Reports
for September 29, 2018 UUSJ Board Meeting**

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Committees that did not submit a report or had no new information to report since the last Board meeting:

- Audit Committee (not a standing committee)
- Communication & Outreach Committee
- Green Activists - Environmental and Climate Justice Task Group
- Gala Planning Committee (not a standing committee)
- Governance Task Force (not a standing committee)
- Issue Selection Process Task Force (not a standing committee)
- Nominating Committee

Advocacy Oversight Committee Report – September, 2018
(Includes the Advocacy Corps and related advocacy efforts)

Members: Lavona Grow, chair, Bob Denniston, Ed Kringer, Anna Rhee (consultant), Sean McCarthy

- Text being finalized

Submitted by: Lavona Grow, Advocacy Oversight Committee Chair

Development Group Report – September 29, 2018

Members: David Strauss of UUC of Rockville, Gary Magnuson of UUC Frederick, Peter Bishop of Washington Ethical Society.

Ex Officio members: Pablo DeJesús, Executive Director and Bob Denniston, Board Chair, and Martha Ades, Board Secretary and Program Committee Chair -- participate as appropriate and as invited.

Summary: the development group has begun working to cover the resource shortfalls discussed in April and June. Events, steps and preliminary recommendations are being developed for FY 2018-2019.

An exciting lead off event has been conceived and early planning begun for a UUSJ hosted fundraising reception at River Road Unitarian Universalist Congregation on December 2, from 4:30 to 6:30 PM.

Our scheduled and confirmed keynote speaker will be Rep. Jamie Raskin (D-MD), we plan to pursue others.

You may remember that the group is planning activities to fill the projected \$12,672 gap in our budget, discussed in April and approved as part of the budget in June, plus other needs that intend to make supporting UUSJ as an organization an exciting investment (as was the recommendation from the floor in April). This with the goal of keeping UUSJ operating at a solvent and successful steady state through FY 2018-2019 as well as positioning the organization to adopt growth minded budgets in the near future.

While the postponement of hiring an Administrative Assistant has resulted in some savings, the need for UUSJ administrative and technical support remains the same, so the group has been using the planning figure of \$20,000.00.

December 2 Fundraising Reception:

It is very exciting news, that UUSJ will host a fundraising reception with Rep. Jamie Raskin (D-MD), and hopefully others. Rep. Raskin represents the 8th District of Maryland in Congress, and is Vice-Ranking Member on the House Judiciary Committee. He is also a member of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee, which has broad oversight authority over federal agency activities. A lawyer and former professor of Constitutional Law at American University, he served for three terms in the Maryland State Senate.

We scheduled this event to capture the hoped for energy coming out of the November 6 elections. If there is a favorable outcome, Rep. Raskin can help us plan the ways to influence the new leadership teams in the House and the Senate. In a different outcome, he can energize us for the work we need to do in the coming months and years.

This event will be a pilot project, testing whether we are serious about creating a base of self-funding to carry out and greatly expand our highly important direct advocacy work. We expect this December 2 event to provide \$3,000 in unencumbered revenue to support UUSJ's general fund to that end.

Executing the December 2 fundraising reception will not be easy, but it is achievable. This is the first, but not the last, fundraising effort that will require Board members and alternates to be totally committed. **This means that each member congregation of UUSJ will be asked to sell at least 10 tickets to the reception.**

- To make our goal, we have set the price **per ticket at \$75**, a fairly modest amount by Washington area reception standards.
- Every member congregation has an active social justice committee or its equivalent, often with subcommittees dedicated to particular causes (e.g., immigration, racial justice, climate change). The members of these committees need to be approached and asked to help grow UUSJ.
- This is also a great opportunity to educate congregants about the great work that UUSJ has been and continues to do on their behalf.
- Our team will supply flyers about the event and UUSJ's leadership will produce a highlight sheet of UUSJ's accomplishments over the past two years for your use in promoting this event.
- We'll also describe your commitment to taking our advocacy program national.

While this event will be held in Maryland, RRUUC is close to D.C. and Virginia. We hope that an additional Member of Congress from Virginia, will join Rep. Raskin for this important event.

In any case, December 2 will also provide a rare opportunity to get to know other members of UUSJ, the leadership, and to speak personally with Rep. Raskin—one of the most progressive and responsive members of the U.S. House of Representatives.

Reminders and Recommendations:

Please remember, this financial shortfall we must fill and to realize the potential the UUSJ offers, requires all of us to work hard and to make personal commitments beyond voting for policies and attending the quarterly meetings. Selling tickets to the December 2 event is one part of what must be done, but other actions must be planned and taken.

1. We remind the Board that we have recommended a re-examination of UUSJ membership levels, prices and benefits to further our base of support.
2. We will also contact UU congregations that have been interested in UUSJ's work, but have not yet made the commitment to membership. We will focus initially on those that were part of conversation establishing UUSJ.
3. Another critical piece of fundraising activity will be personal contact with large donors. That effort will begin soon and is projected to make a substantial dent in our shortfall.
4. We also recommend a \$500 per congregation, over and above the fair share contribution, commitment. This can be done by raising funds at congregation events such as showing films (UUSJ has a small film library), having speakers, doing educational events at which you can pass the hat to support UUSJ, and other ways. This doesn't have to be done overnight: it can be achieved over the next nine months, before the end of the fiscal year.

We will have other recommendations as the year proceeds. These are important, because the likelihood of a large funding source to provide for our operations is slim, since foundations are prohibited by law from granting to groups that do direct legislative advocacy—one of our core activities. We need to be proactive and take control of our own future. It starts with our December 2 reception and will continue throughout the coming years.

We are confident that the combination of our visionary mission, our recent successes, and the ability to secure the necessary financial support from our own funds will carry us forward to a future we can all, as dedicated UUs, be proud of.

Submitted by: David Strauss

Escalating Economic Inequity Task Group Report – September 24, 2018

The EEI holds meetings online the first Sunday of each month at 7pm ET

Main participating members: Martha Ades, Rev. Earl Koteen, Lavona Grow, Peter Clark, Adam Wasserman (chair) Ex Officio member: Bob Denniston, Chair.

EEI has continued to focus on the social safety net. The Farm Bill, and opposing efforts to add restrictive work requirements for SNAP eligibility, were the focus of UUSJ's Lobby Day in August. This was the 2nd effort devoted specifically to the Farm Bill.

At our September EEI online meeting, volunteer Rhonda van Roekel summarized information she gathered on new threats to the Affordable Care Act. A multi-state legal challenge to the constitutionality of the ACA is working its way through the courts. It's possible that we will see legislative initiatives designed to meet some of the legal objections. The lower court decision is not expected for another several months, and it is certain to be appealed. It's a complicated issue and Rhonda plans to keep abreast of developments and opportunities for us to take action.

I will be moving away from the Washington area to New Mexico in early October, and will not be able to continue to lead the EEI group and convene meetings. It has been a real pleasure to help lead this group over the past two years and I plan to stay engaged with UUSJ from out West.

Submitted by: Adam Wasserman, EEI Thought Leader

Immigration Task Group Report – September 21, 2018

Through the summer the Group has been meeting every two weeks

Members: Don Chery, Lavona Grow, John Gubbings, Charlotte Jones-Carroll (convener), Sean McCarthy, Dean Wanderer, Gayle Boyd, Kalman Rupp, Serena Lowe (members).

Ex Officio members: Pablo DeJesús, Executive Director and Bob Denniston, Board Chair, and Anna Rhee, advocacy consultant -- participate as appropriate and as invited.

The Immigration team meets twice a month, monitors websites and participates in webinars to inform our responses to the many administrative initiatives detrimental to immigrants and refugees.

Among these are:

- **DHS Budget for ICE/CBP:** After our partners alerted us to the possibility of a Continuing Resolution that would “continue” ICE’s budget at a higher level based on emergency transfers, we asked UUSJ advocacy team to deliver a letter opposing this to Sen. Van Hollen, a member of the Appropriations Committee.
- **Refugee resettlement levels:** The committee urged UUSJ to sign onto an interfaith letter objecting to the Administration’s proposal to reduce refugee entries to the US for 2019 to 30,000. Even the 2018 level is unlikely to be reached owing to slow government processing.
- **Separation of Children and Child Detention:** We objected to the zero-tolerance approach of the Department of Justice which caused over 2000 children to be separated from their families at the border, nearly 500 of whom are still not reunited, despite huge public outcry and court decisions. UUSJ’s advocacy team [Advocacy Corps] carried a letter on this topic to Hill offices in July. We are gearing up to oppose possible regulatory changes that would obviate the Flores settlement (which enforced a 20-day limit on detention of children), in view of assessment from many quarters that prolonged detention of minors is severely damaging to their mental health. We are tracking other practices like slow discharge from detention, that caused sharp increases in detained children totals (including unaccompanied minors). We recommended UUSJ sign-on to an interfaith letter regarding these proposals to change child-detention practices, which was signed and sent.
- **Opposition to Texas’s Efforts to Enjoin (Amicus Brief filing):** During July we facilitated UUSJ becoming part of an *Amicus Brief* (Friend of the Court) filing opposing the State of Texas’s efforts to enjoin Deferred Action for Childhood Arrival (DACA). See our “[Statement of Identity and Interest](#)”. We also made the [full amicus brief available](#). UUSJ was honored to join, and help bring on UUSC.
- **Public Charge definition change:** The committee developed a statement detailing the reasons that DHS/USCIS/OMB should not expand the definition of “public charge” to include use of many additional benefits. This could be used as a pretext for refusing requests to “adjust status” from residents applying for legal permanent resident status as well as refusing admission to the US for individuals outside the country. We will send this to the government during the 60-day public comment period.

- **Comprehensive Statement on Immigration Issues:** The committee plans a Hill visit during partner “action week” in late September, carrying our summary of past and current positions on a variety of immigration and refugee topics. We developed bullet points to use, and plan to share these with UU congregations who might want to develop their own letters to their Members of Congress. We hope to collaborate with **UUSC** by also delivering their own communications on immigration-related topics.
- **2020 Census:** We wrote to Department of Commerce objecting to the inclusion of a question about citizenship status in the 2020 census.
- **Immigration Film Fest:** We are cooperating with the 2018 Immigration Film Fest by posting their promotional material for October 27-28 event at our congregations.
- **Committee 18-month priorities:** Look for our priorities for the next 18-months, expected to be agreed and shared by end-October.

Submitted by: Charlotte Jones Carroll, convener, UUSJ Immigration Committee

Program Committee Report – September 24, 2018

The Program Committee holds monthly meetings

Members: Martha Ades, Chair, John Gubbings, Marsha White

Ex Officio members: Pablo DeJesus, Executive Director, Bob Denniston, Chair. Lavona Grow, AOC chair as needed and asked.

The Program Committee held one meeting during the summer to plan for the UUSJ program needs. We continue to revise program checklists that provide guidelines to facilitate meeting logistics.

Over the summer support was given for:

- Track Play Reading – SWEAT: After multiple queries to congregations in the area to support this program and learning that most staffs were not engaged over the summer to make a decision to host the play at their site, the program was put on hold. Feasibility of offering the program will be readdressed when more of the congregations have staff available to do scheduling.
- Fundraising Event – The program Committee is working with the Development Committee to organize a reception with a Maryland member of Congress. The event will be a fundraiser that will have refreshments and a short talk from the Congressman about how the new election impacts our progressive values. It is scheduled for **December 2nd** at River Road UU and currently **Rep. Jamie Raskin** has agreed to be present.
- UUSJ Board Meetings – supported the September 29th meeting. Planning for other meetings during the 2018-2019 year.

Submitted by: Martha Ades, Program Chair