



Unitarian Universalists for Social Justice

Write Here! Write Now! **September 11, 2018**

ISSUE: Nomination of Judge Brett Kavanaugh to the Supreme Court

www.uusj.org click on Advocacy for Issue Action Information

advocacy@uusj.org 703-786-5206 or 202-600-9132

Send scanned letters via PDF/emails to advocacy@uusj.org by Monday, Sep. 10, 12pm ET

Instructions for Writing and Delivering Your Letters

- **Focus on the topic - Oppose the nomination of Judge Kavanaugh to the Supreme Court.** The Senate is now considering his nomination for a lifetime appointment. The small portion of Judge Kavanaugh's documents and record that are available to the public reflect that his views are a threat to UU values. See specifics on page 2.
- **Be original and speak from the heart.** If possible describe a personal experience or story, or include 1-2 talking points (on page 2) **in your own words**, to support the main message.
- **Include a clear and specific action request.** "I urge you to..."
- **Include your name and complete mailing address** - to prove you are a constituent.
- **Unless an Advocacy Corps member is hand-delivering letters, mail or send your letters to arrive by 12pm Monday, September 10. PDF/scan and email letters to advocacy@uusj.org subject line: WHWN (include the issue topic), name and state of your congregation.**

Background & UU Grounding

Background: President Trump has nominated Judge Brett Kavanaugh to succeed Anthony M. Kennedy on the Supreme Court. President Trump pledged to nominate only justices who he said would "automatically" overturn Roe v. Wade. And Judge Kavanaugh's available record indicate that he meets that test.

The Senate Judiciary Committee held hearings the week of September 4 to consider Kavanaugh's confirmation – despite the fact that his full record has not been released. The documents that are available make it clear that Judge Kavanaugh is "outside the mainstream of judicial thinking" and his confirmation would put at risk laws and policies that UUs value. The appointment of a Supreme Court justice requires a simple majority confirmation vote of the Senate.

Critical civil and human rights issues that are at risk include access to health care, the ability of women to control their own bodies, voting rights, labor rights, economic security, rights of immigrants and persons with disabilities, LGBTQ equality, equal opportunity and affirmative action, environmental protections, gun control and safety, and whether the judiciary will serve as a constitutional check on the president. We are focusing on a few issues at this time. (See page 2.)

UU Grounding: The UUA and UUSJ have taken positions to maintain the separation of church and state, which includes opposing public funding of private schools, opposing prayer in schools, and keeping the Johnson Amendment (prohibits all 501(c)(3) non-profit organizations, including churches, from endorsing or opposing political candidates).

The [2015 Statement of Conscience on Reproductive Justice](#) calls on us to "advocate for comprehensive reproductive health services, including contraception, prenatal care, abortion, and infertility treatment." Our First Principle calls for the inherent worth and dignity of all people. Kavanaugh's record provides serious concern for safeguarding women's right to reproductive justice.

The [2017 Statement of Conscience on Escalating Economic Inequity](#) addresses access to affordable, quality health care, including coverage of pre-existing conditions.

(See other side for Sample Letter, Key Message, Facts and Talking Points)

Key Messages, Facts and Talking Points

Key Messages:

Oppose the nomination of Judge Brett Kavanaugh to the Supreme Court. His nomination poses a threat to laws and policies that UU's value including: **access to quality and affordable health for all** - Affordable Care Act (pre-existing conditions); **reproductive choice for women** - Roe v. Wade; and the **separation of church and state** - especially in schools. His appointment could well tip the Supreme Court against our fundamental freedoms for decades.

Facts and Talking Points based on his available record:

- **Reproductive rights must be protected.** Based on his record, Judge Kavanaugh shows hostility towards and a willingness to weaken or overturn women's right to access abortion. Nearly 70 percent of Americans believe that Roe v. Wade should be upheld and that our Constitutional right to abortion should be protected. Yet **he has argued for curtailing reproductive rights and access to contraception, and has suggested that Roe v. Wade should not be considered irreversible**, thus opening the door for the Court to reverse its previous ruling.
- **Kavanaugh's record shows he'd be a threat to access to quality healthcare** as he has been critical of the Affordable Care Act (ACA), making it clear that he is not committed to protecting access to health care for women and people with preexisting conditions. His writings suggest he would welcome a legal challenge to the ACA.
- **We must maintain clear separation of church and state.** The majority of faith organizations support the separation of church and state. **Kavanaugh's rulings shows that he would not preserve the wall of separation between church and state**, especially in schools. He has argued for the permissibility of public school prayer and use of public funds for religious activities. We need a Court that will protect the right of parents and students to attend public school without being coerced to participate in religious activities or be proselytized at school events.

Sample Letter (write to both of your Senators)

(as much as possible, use your own words)

Today's date

Dear Senator _____ *[name of your Senator - write to both Senators],*

I am a Unitarian Universalist from *[optional: name of congregation and location]*. I urge you to oppose the nomination of Judge Brett Kavanaugh to the Supreme Court.

Judge Kavanaugh's available record shows that he lacks the fair-mindedness necessary to serve a lifetime Supreme Court appointment. Of particular concern to me is:

[choose from below or insert your own story or concern. Or add a talking point from page 1]

- **Protecting a woman's right to reproductive choice and access to reproductive health services and contraception.**
- **Protecting access to affordable and quality health care, especially coverage of pre-existing conditions.**
- **Maintaining a clear line of separation of church and state, especially in schools.**

We need a nominee who will protect civil and human rights for all, and one who will make legal judgments that create a more just America.

[If your Senators already oppose the nomination, thank them, and urge them to speak up publicly and talk to undecided colleagues about the nomination.]

Sincerely,

YOUR NAME and **COMPLETE ADDRESS**

(See other side for Writing and Delivering Letters Instructions and Background)