

May 23, 2007



Dear Member of Congress:

On behalf of the over 1400 member organizations of the National Religious Broadcasters (NRB), I write to urge your careful consideration of H.R. 2316, the *Honest Leadership and Open Government Act of 2007*. Since this legislation will come to the Floor for a vote this week, NRB is asking for your vigilance in the Floor process. *It is critically important to our Association that certain egregious provisions, already defeated or re-written during Judiciary Committee mark-up, do not to re-enter H.R. 2316 via Floor amendments.*

Our primary concern is the possibility of an amendment that places limits on grassroots lobbying. The First Amendment to the Constitution guarantees every American citizen the right to petition their government for redress of grievances. However, we have already witnessed two separate attempts to hamstring this fundamental American freedom. First, in the Senate lobby reform bill (the problematic language was eventually removed before final passage), and during the House Judiciary Committee mark-up when an amendment was introduced that had the net effect of severely hampering grassroots lobbying. While that amendment did not pass, it signals a commitment by certain Members of Congress to limit the free expression of the average American. *We expect an attempt to insert this or similar language on the Floor.*

Our second concern is the potential for a Floor amendment that might re-define the legal definition of the word "client," with regards to lobbying, among not-for-profit Associations. The original language of H.R. 2316 contained such a provision and it would have had a chilling effect on our cherished right of association. While it appears Judiciary Chairman Conyers fixed the legislation during mark-up, NRB again wants to ensure that no amendments are offered on the Floor that jeopardize the Constitutional rights of our members by redefining lobbying by non-profit associations, or forcing the disclosure of our membership lists.

Please know that the members of NRB, along with a vast array of organizations and associations on both sides of the political aisle, are committed to pressing for passage of a clean lobbying reform bill. It is your responsibility to ensure that the rights of American citizens are in no way sacrificed on the legislative road to lobby reform.

Thank you so much for your time and attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

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