



SISTERS OF CHARITY OF NAZARETH

SCN CENTER

April 5, 2004

Ms. Mai T. Dinh
Acting Assistant General Counsel
Washington, DC

Dear Ms. Mai T. Dinh:

Christians "are called to release those bound unjustly, set free the oppressed, break every yoke; share our bread with the hungry; shelter the oppressed and homeless; clothe the naked" (Isaiah 58). To speak for those made poor and voiceless is a significant aspect of our ministry. It is not a political statement though these needs may be addressed to Congress and / or the Administration. Calling attention to violations of human rights is included in this mandate to be Christian.

As citizens of this country, we also have the obligation to observe and speak out in support of the principles on which our country is based. The first amendment to the Constitution clearly states, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances." This amendment does not tell the FEC to change the laws of Congress!

These proposed rules would damage non-profit groups across the spectrum and restrict first amendment freedoms in ways that are unhealthy for our democracy. These proposed rules would also interfere with the Internal Revenue Code which **already** prohibits 501(c)(3) charities from intervening in political candidate campaigns. Furthermore, nothing in the McCain-Feingold campaign reform law or the Supreme Court's decision *upholding it* provides any basis for these rules. U.S. Supreme Court stated that the limits on the law on unregulated corporate, union and large individual contributions apply to political parties and not interest groups. Lastly, these proposed rules would actually diminish civic participation in government rather than strengthen it. This is exactly the opposite result intended by most supporters of campaign finance reform.

I strongly urge you, Ms. Dinh, to fully consider the ramifications of these proposals and the amendment which was established over 200 years ago to ensure our democracy! I am confident that you will protect this right to freedom of speech which we all enjoy!

Sincerely,

Joetta Venneman, PBVM / Margaret Hohman, SCN

Joetta Venneman, PBVM and Margaret Hohman, SCN

Office of Global Ministries

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Mary E. Driscoll, SCN
Deborah A. Zimmerman, SCNA

Kathleen Marie Roben, SCNA
Louise Mally, OCPD
Louise Marie Egan, SCN
Christina Rodenbaugh

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Irene Satory, SCN
Barbara R. Draw, SCN
Mary Guelmer, SCN

C. Beth Vannucci



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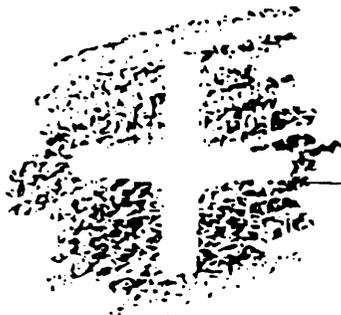
Joseph Martin H. Bradley, SCN
Sheila Madden SCN
Sister Jeanne Marie Wether, SCN
Sister Thelma Cameron, SCN
Sister Mary J. Pfefferman
Sister Jean Carmel
Alice Adams, SCN
Sister Phyllis Dullin, SCN
Lucille Massey, S.C.N.
Therese Cook, SCN
H. CR

Sr. John Ann Keeline
Sr. Lawrence Ann Ryan
Marylyn Spink
Mary Jane Mc Maken
Carmelita Serolini
Carleen Mouser SCN
Sister Virginia Ann Lachenmann
Sister Clare Benedict Willeman
Sister Mildred Mc Govern
Sr. Mary Bulea
Sr. Catherine Looby
Sr. Ann Leo, SCN

Sister Christine Ellis, SCN
Sister Mary Kevin Egan
Alice Maritz Kern, SCN
Celeste Ready, SCN
Ann M. Mc Brath, SCN
Pat Harley, SCN
Barbara White Howard, SCN
Carmelita Keating
Martha Clark SCN
Sister Catherine Looby, SCN
Betty Shelton, SCN
Sr. Roberts Maria
H.

- Patricia Kelley, SCN
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- Mary Sullivan SCN
- Sister Martha Rita Luckett
- Alberty Woffen, SCN
- Sister Ann Jeanne Fardeley
- Margaret Sullivan, SCN
- Vivian M. Sebelhaus, SCN
- Dr. ~~Kenneth~~ MacKinnon
- Dr. James Albert Higgins SCN
- Dr. Kenneth G. Chase, SCN
- Angela Weddington, SCN
- Charlotte Ann Bartley, SCN
- Judith Ann Wilson, B.C.N.

- Sister William Ann Hayden
- Frances Krumpelman, SCN



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Shalini D'Souza, SCN; Julie Driscoll, SCN; Barbara Flores, SCN and M. Serra Goethals, SCN
Congregational Leadership
Sisters of Charity of Nazareth
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