



March 5, 2019

Dear Members of the U.S. House of Representatives,

Founded by Catholic Sisters in the progressive spirit of Vatican II, NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice educates, organizes, and lobbies for social and economic transformation. Since 1971, the Catholic Sisters and activists of NETWORK have lobbied for policies that support vulnerable people and prioritize the common good. We have more than 100,000 activists around the nation with a presence in every congressional district. Their advocacy is rooted in faith values.

Our Catholic faith teaches that we have a responsibility to participate in politics out of a concern for the common good. It was Pope Francis who—when asked about the Catholic obligation to participate in the civic arena—responded that “A good Catholic meddles in politics”. At the core of NETWORK Lobby’s effectiveness as an advocacy organization is the ability to engage a broad membership around ideals of a just society. This is how we influence legislators’ policy decisions. Our work is predicated on a functional democracy where lawmakers are held accountable and constituents trust that they are taken into account.

This responsibility to participate means each person also has a fundamental right and must be equipped with the resources needed to participate. Our legislators cannot decide that some people are not worthy of participating in democracy or that some voices do not merit their attention. No individual or community should be disenfranchised by federal policy.

This ability to freely participate in our democracy is diminishing. Money is too influential in our politics, elections are driven by dark money, and the power and representation of individual American’s is being undermined through voter suppression and gerrymandering. In less than a decade since the Supreme Court’s rulings in *Shelby County* and *Citizens United* we have seen an unimpeded chipping away at the basic tenets of our democracy. [Poll](#) after [poll](#) has shown that corruption is a top concern for Americans.

Increasingly brash attempts to distort the voice of voters and tip the political scales indicate a tipping point for our nation: it’s time to restore our democratic system. H.R.1 includes sweeping provisions to facilitate voter registration, to strengthen voting rights oversight and enforcement, to improve and secure election operations, to promote voter participation and to protect the redistricting process from political manipulation. This push is by necessity bold and comprehensive.

NETWORK Lobby is urging Congress to support this bold, wide-ranging legislation and to vote down any MTR offered on the House floor. These reforms are desperately needed and overwhelmingly desired by the American people. Failure to pass the full reform package will only increase widespread suspicions and disillusionment among the electorate. As it stands, H.R.1 is solidly rooted in successful state efforts to breathe new life into our democracy. **NETWORK urges quick passage to begin restoring faith in our government and we will score votes on H.R.1 in our annual Voting Record.**

Highest regards,

S. Simone Campbell SSS

Sister Simone Campbell, SSS

Executive Director

NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice