**CHURCH-STATE SEPARATION**

From *Rogan’s List*: Last week, the administration asked the National Institute of Health to stop acquiring fetal tissue obtained from women who have had legal abortions, a move that will suspend studies in process that are seeking a cure to the HIV virus. (Write-up 12/14/18)

**TELL** the White House, the Department of Health and Human Services, and our Congresspeople that the concerns of the religious right should not be dictating policy that impedes public health and **ASK** them to work toward lifting this ban and assuring that finding a cure for HIV remains a top priority

• **Donald Trump**, the White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Washington DC 50500, (202) 456-1111

• **Alex Azar**, Secretary of Health and Human Services, 200 Independence Ave. SW, Washington DC 20201, (202) 690-7000

• **Senator Dianne Feinstein** (D-CA), 331 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-3841

• **Senator Kamala Harris** (D-CA), 112 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-3553

• **Representative Jimmy Panetta** (D-CA), 228 Cannon House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-2861

From *Rogan’s List*: House Ways and Means Chairman Kevin Brady released his year-end tax (HR 88), and buried on p. 142 is yet another repeal of the Johnson Amendment. The Johnson Amendment is a provision in the U.S. tax code, since 1954, that prohibits all 501(c)(3) non-profit organizations from endorsing or opposing political candidates. Churches fall into this category. One of Trump’s campaign promises was to eliminate the Johnson amendment. (Write-up 12/14/18)

**INSIST** to our Congresspeople that we want the Johnson Amendment kept as an essential barrier between church and state

• **Senator Dianne Feinstein** (D-CA), 331 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-3841

• **Senator Kamala Harris** (D-CA), 112 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-3553

• **Representative Jimmy Panetta** (D-CA), 228 Cannon House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-2861

**From Americans United for Separation of Church and State (AU): “**Just last month, [Trump’s attorney General nominee, William] Barr joined former attorneys general Edwin Meese III and Michael B. Mukasey in a *Washington Post*column praising [outgoing Attorney General Jeff] Sessions in part for his October 2017 directive “to all executive departments containing guidance for protecting religious expression.” The Sessions order… is just a blueprint for using religion to discriminate. Americans United criticized the guidance for insisting that religious organizations have a right to take taxpayer money and discriminate against employees and the people they serve. The language, AU said, could give federal government workers the right to use their religious beliefs as a reason to discriminate and deny services to other Americans. Some older statements by Barr are equally troubling. Barr, who served as attorney general under President George H.W. Bush from November of 1991 until the end of Bush’s presidency early in 1993, gave at least two speeches in 1992 during which he attacked church-state separation and secular government. Addressing a conference of governors on juvenile crime in Milwaukee on April 1, 1992,Barr blasted public schools for no longer providing moral instruction. He asserted that public schools had undergone a ‘moral lobotomy’ and blamed it on ‘extremist notions of separation of church and state.’ About six months later, Barr struck again [in a speech] to the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights, a traditionalist Catholic group, Barr called for the imposition of ‘God’s law’ in America. ‘To the extent that a society’s moral culture is based on God’s law, it will guide men toward the best possible life,’ Barr said. He also attacked ‘modern secularists’ for supposedly ushering in cultural decline, remarking, ‘The secularists of today are clearly fanatics.’ Barr seems to be uncomfortable with things like secular government, church-state separation, religious pluralism and indeed the realities of modern life. (Write-up 12/12/18)

**TELL** key members of the Senate Judiciary Committee that Americans cannot be served fairly by an Attorney General with such clear religious bias

• **Senator Chick Grassley** (R-IA), Chair, Senate Judiciary Committee, 224 Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-5225

• **Senator Dianne Feinstein** (D-CA), Ranking Member, Senate Judiciary Committee, 224 Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-5225

• **Senator Kamala Harris** (D- A), Member, Senate Judiciary Committee, 224 Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-5225

**CONSUMER PROTECTIONS and WORKPLACE RIGHTS**

From United Farmworkers: “Farm workers at Watsonville-based Premiere Raspberries, a major berry grower, walked off the job on strike in both 2017 and 2018 due to repeated violations of the law. Premiere workers voted for the UFW [United Farm Workers Union] in a state-supervised secret-ballot election conducted by the Agricultural Labor Relations Board [ALRB] on Aug. 9, 2017. After the company refused to negotiate, last December the workers followed California law and asked for a neutral state mediator to draw up a contract based on data both sides had the opportunity to provide. The company refused to participate, but had their attorney present. The mediator issued a preliminary contract on August 11, 2018. The company appealed it. On Aug. 29 the full ALRB ordered the grower to implement the union contract for the approximately 550 workers. Again, the company refused. Workers are fed up. They are tired of the company continuously breaking the law. **WellPict distributes all of Premiere's raspberries under their label.** The workers are demanding that WellPict ensure their contracted growers obey the law.” (Write-up 12/12/18)

**EXPLAIN** to WellPict that we want berries sourced from growers who honor labor law—which means they need to drop Premiere

• **Dan Crowley**, Vice-President for Sales and Marketing, WellPict Berries, 209 Riverside Road, Watsonville, CA 95076, (831) 722-6340

From *Axios*: “Democratic Rep. Maxine Waters is proposing a new direction for the House Financial Services Committee, which she will almost certainly lead in the next Congress…. The most notable proposed change is lumping oversight of ‘International Financial Institutions’—which could mean anything from the World Bank to foreign banks—with the existing Terrorism and Illicit Finance subcommittee, while scrapping the Monetary Policy and Trade subcommittee. As word leaks out about the proposal, it's catching the attention of foreign banks. It's a strong signal that Waters is not just *talking* about going after the likes of Deutsche Bank, sources familiar with the proposal tell Axios…. Waters has been fixated on going after international financial institutions for their potential roles as laundromats for bad actors like Russia and China. A big target for Waters is Deutsche Bank, for its ties to President Trump and Russia money laundering. Other proposed changes to the House Financial Services Committee include dropping insurance from the ‘Housing and Insurance’ subcommittee, and renaming it ‘Housing and Community Development.’ Waters also proposed to swap ‘Consumer Credit’ with ‘Consumer Protection for the current Financial Institutions and Consumer Credit subcommittee. There's also a new proposed subcommittee, solely focused on diversity and inclusion within the financial sector, as first reported by Reuters.” (Write-up 12/12/18)

**THANKS** to Waters for her willingness to take on new issues and to reshape her the Finance Committee to better serve ordinary Americans

• **Representative Maxine Waters** (D-CA), 2221 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-2201

From *Politico*: “The Trump administration for months concealed a report that showed Wells Fargo charged college students fees that were on average several times higher than some of its competitors. The ‘unpublished’ report was obtained by POLITICO through a Freedom of Information Act request. It was produced by the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau office previously led by Seth Frotman, who quit as the bureau’s top student loan official in protest of Trump administration policies. Frotman said in his resignation letter that CFPB leaders had ‘suppressed the publication’ of the report. The previously unseen analysis examined the fees associated with debit cards and other financial products provided by 14 companies through agreements with more than 500 colleges across the country. Wells Fargo provided roughly one-quarter of those accounts but the bank collected more than half of all fees paid by students, according to the report data. The bank’s average annual fee per account was nearly $50, the highest of any provider. The report raises questions about whether campus accounts with high fees comply with Education Department rules requiring colleges to make sure the products they help promote are ‘not inconsistent with the best financial interests’ of their students.” (Write-up 12/12/18)

**INSIST** that the CFPB act to rein in Wells Fargo’s practices regarding student cardholders and **CRITICIZE** the CFPB’s decision not to release important information like this to consumers

• **Kathy Kraninger**, Director, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, 1700 G St. NW, Washington DC 20552, (844) 411-2372

**ELECTIONS**

HR1, the very first bill that our newly-elected, Democratic-majority House of Representatives will introduce next month, aims to expand voting rights and fight campaign corruption. The bill will face savage opposition from those who thrive in the current ecosystem of lobbyists and dark money, so HR1 and its proud sponsors really need to hear our support. (Write-up 12/14/18)

**ASSURE** our Representative that HR1 should be a top priority for the new Congress

• **Representative Jimmy Panetta** (D-CA), 228 Cannon House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-2861

**ENVIRONMENT**

From our own Jimmy Panetta: “My bill, the Commercial Engagement through Ocean Technology Act (CENOTE) Act…. will accelerate the deployment of unmanned maritime technologies by coordinating NOAA [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration] partnership opportunities, including with institutions such as the Naval Postgraduate School. The bill supports coastal communities, fisheries, environmental science, disaster mitigation, and national defense. It passed the House unanimously and is expected to be signed into law.” (Write-up 12/14/18)

**THANKS** to our Representative for defending the waters of the Central Coast and for supporting oceanic science

• **Representative Jimmy Panetta** (D-CA), 228 Cannon House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-2861

The “Driftnet Modernization and Bycatch Reduction Act,” S.2773, was introduced by our own Dianne Feinstein and is cosponsored by Kamala Harris, along with others from both sides of the aisle. This legislation would phase out the use of harmful large-mesh driftnets off the Coast of California. The driftnets, which can be more than a mile long, are left in the ocean overnight in order to catch swordfish, However, at least 60 other marine species, including whales, dolphins, sea lions, sea turtles, fish, and sharks, can also become entangled in the large mesh nets, injuring or killing them. Most of these animals, referred to as bycatch, are discarded. In the United States, large mesh driftnets are already banned in the Atlantic Ocean and Gulf of Mexico, as well as off the coasts of Washington, Oregon, Alaska and Hawaii. However, they remain legal off the coast of California. The United States is also a member of international agreements that ban large-scale driftnets in international waters. The S.2773was made necessary after the Trump administration rejected a rule last year that would have increased accountability in the California swordfish fishery*.* The billphases out the use of large mesh driftnets in all U.S. waters by 2020 and authorizes the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to develop a program to help fisheries transition to more sustainable methods. S.2773 has made it through the Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee and can be placed on the Senate agenda. (Write-up 12/14/18)

**TELL** the Senate Majority Leader that we want to see prompt action on this bipartisan legislation

• **Senator Mitch McConnell** (R-KY), Senate Majority Leader, 217 Russell Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-2541

**THANKS** to Feinstein for introducing this legislation and to Harris for cosponsoring

• **Senator Dianne Feinstein** (D-CA), 331 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-3841

• **Senator Kamala Harris** (D-CA), 112 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-3553

From the *Los Angeles Times*: “The Trump administration is poised to roll back Clean Water Act protections on millions of acres of waterways and wetlands, including up to two-thirds of California’s inland streams, following through on a promise to agriculture interests and real estate developers to rewrite an Obama-era rule limiting pollution…. At stake are billions of dollars in potential development rights, the quality of drinking water for tens of millions of Americans and rules that affect farming in much of the country, as well as wildlife habitat for most of the nation’s migratory birds and many other species. Under the administration’s plan, the Clean Water Act’s protections would no longer apply to most seasonal ponds, wetlands and streams, including those that form major parts of drinking-water systems and fisheries throughout the nation, particularly in the arid West. As many as 1 in 3 Americans drink water derived in part from seasonal streams that may no longer get protections, according to scientific studies the Obama-era EPA [Environmental Protection Agency] relied on in writing the original rule. In California, where many significant stretches of fresh water dry up in the summer, as much as 66% of the state’s freshwater streams could lose federal protection. The waters would continue to have protection under state law, but few states are in position to replace the regulatory systems currently run by federal officials.” (Write-up 12/14/18)

**EXPLAIN** to the EPA (again) that this is *not* how we protect the environment

• **Andrew Wheeler**, Acting Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, 1200 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Washington DC 20460, (202) 564-4700

**ASK** our Congresspeople to explore ways they can work against these proposed rule changes

• **Senator Dianne Feinstein** (D-CA), 331 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-3841

• **Senator Kamala Harris** (D-CA), 112 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-3553

• **Representative Jimmy Panetta** (D-CA), 228 Cannon House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-2861

From *Rogan’s List*: “The Trump administration [via the Department of the Interior]… detailed its plan to open nine million acres to drilling and mining by stripping away protections for the sage grouse, an imperiled ground-nesting bird that oil companies have long considered an obstacle to some of the richest deposits in the American West. In one stroke, the action would open more land to drilling than any other step the administration has taken, environmental policy experts said. It drew immediate criticism from environmentalists while energy-industry representatives praised the move, saying that the earlier policy represented an overreach of federal authority. With this single action, the administration is saying: ‘This landscape doesn’t matter. This species doesn’t matter. Oil and gas matter. We don’t need this oil, just like we don’t need tons of coal anymore. Green Energy is our future for good climate and jobs. (Write-up 12/14/18)

**TELL** Trump and the Secretary of the Interior to stop giving their oil friends our natural resources and destroying our native species

• **Donald Trump**, the White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Washington DC 50500, (202) 456-1111

• **Ryan Zinke**, Secretary of the Interior, 1849 C St. NW, Washington DC 20240, (202) 208-3100

**TELL** our Congresspeople that we object to these proposed rule changes and want to see them take a vocal stance against them

• **Senator Dianne Feinstein** (D-CA), 331 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-3841

• **Senator Kamala Harris** (D-CA), 112 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-3553

• **Representative Jimmy Panetta** (D-CA), 228 Cannon House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-2861

According to *Bloomberg*, “The Trump administration is taking a major step toward allowing a first-in-a-generation seismic search for oil and gas under Atlantic waters, despite protests that the geological tests involve loud air gun blasts that will harm whales, dolphins and other animals.” We can and will fight this threat, but for a long-term fix, we need legislation barring seismic testing in the Atlantic, which is the purpose of S.1263, the “Atlantic Seismic Airgun Protection Act. Senator Corrie Booker (D-NJ) introduced S.1263 back in May of 2017. Since then, the legislation has been stuck in the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, whose chair, Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), will not put it on the committee agenda. (Write-up 12/14/18)

**EXPLAIN** to the Interior Department and its Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (which approves seismic testing permits) that we want to protect oceanic life, particularly large sea mammals, and therefore object to seismic airgun testing

• **Ryan Zinke**, Secretary of the Interior, 1849 C St. NW, Washington DC 20240, (202) 208-3100

• **Dr. Walter Criuckshank**, Acting Director, Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, 1849 C St. NW, Washington DC 20240, (202) 208-6474

**STRESS** to the chair of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee that we resent her burying S.1263 and that we want to see it on the committee’s agenda

• **Senator Lisa Murkowski** (R-AK), Chair, Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, 304 Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-4971

**URGE** our Congresspeople to stand fast in protecting our oceans from seismic airgun testing

• **Senator Dianne Feinstein** (D-CA), 331 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-3841

• **Senator Kamala Harris** (D-CA), 112 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-3553

• **Representative Jimmy Panetta** (D-CA), 228 Cannon House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-2861

From Outdoor Alliance: “Until December 21, there is the rare opportunity to get a bunch of important outdoor recreation legislation passed—and it's likely to be the last good chance to do it for a while. Congress is working on a package of outdoor recreation bills that will protect special landscapes and waters, ensure adequate funding to manage and acquire lands, and improve public lands management. They have made substantial progress, but your elected officials need to know they are a priority to get across the finish line right now. It's crucial that they hear from you—we can make this happen!” (Write-up 12/12/18)

**ASK** our Congresspeople to support timely passage of an outdoor recreation package

• **Senator Dianne Feinstein** (D-CA), 331 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-3841

• **Senator Kamala Harris** (D-CA), 112 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-3553

• **Representative Jimmy Panetta** (D-CA), 228 Cannon House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-2861

PG&E has faced scrutiny over the safety of its electrical power system in the aftermath of the 2017 fire siege. Cal Fire investigators have found the that the company's equipment was involved in starting at least 16 of last year's fires.... That’s in addition to the San Bruno explosion and this year’s Butte County wildfire. (Write-up 12/12/18)

**ASK** California Attorney General Xavier Becerra to weigh in on whether reckless operation or maintenance of PG&E electrical lines would violate state law

• **Xavier Becerra**, California Attorney General, 1300 "I" Street, Sacramento, CA 94244-2919, (916) 210-6276

From Wilderness Watch: As the end of the current session of Congress approaches, we’re facing a year-end rush of “must-pass” federal legislation. One of the risks of this period is having unrelated legislation—often partisan and harmful—tacked onto unrelated “must-pass” legislation. On candidate for such an end run is Lisa Murkowski’s S.785, which, as Wildreness Watch explains, “would make *all* national wildlife refuge lands (except the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge), including within designated Wilderness, available for privatization. These ecologically sensitive lands are afforded the most protected status available under the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act, and should never be offered for privatization. This is especially true where, as in S. 785, there is no requirement for showing any prior use or actual connection to the land to be privatized.” (Write-up 12/12/18)

**ASK** our Congresspeople to vote against any “must-pass” legislation to which S.785 is attached

• **Senator Dianne Feinstein** (D-CA), 331 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-3841

• **Senator Kamala Harris** (D-CA), 112 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-3553

• **Representative Jimmy Panetta** (D-CA), 228 Cannon House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-2861

H.R.3953, the “Securing Our Borders and Wilderness Act,” has made it through committee and now can be placed on the House calendar at Speaker Paul Ryan’s discretion. H.R.3953 would give Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) the freedom to operate in protected wilderness areas, regardless of potential habitat/species damage. The legislation specifically empowers CBP personnel in wilderness areas to access structures, installations, and roads; use motor vehicles and aircraft; deploy temporary infrastructure in response to emergencies (these are CBP “emergencies,” not emergencies like fire, flooding, or missing persons); and to construct and maintain roads with Department of the Interior approval. (Write-up 12/12/18)

**REQUEST** vigilance from our Representative in looking for and opposing any efforts to move this legislation forward

• **Representative Jimmy Panetta** (D-CA), 228 Cannon House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-2861

While Donald Trump has refused to sign on to the Paris Climate Accords, several Sovereign Native Nations within the U.S. have declared their commitment to the Accords. (Write-up 12/12/18)

**THANKS** for taking this action in the face of U.S. intransigence to

• **Standing Rock Sioux Tribe**, Building #1 N. Standing Rock, PO Box D, Fort Yates, ND 58538, (701) 854-8500

• **Quinault Indian Nation Tribal Community**, PO Box 129, Tahola, WA 98587, (360) 276-8211

• **Swinomish Tribal Community**, 11404 Moorage Way, LaConner, WA 98257, (360) 466-7200

• **Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska**, 320 Willoughby Ave., Juneau, AK 99801, (907) 586-1432

The failure of the U.S. to take more aggressive action on climate change isn’t due to a lack of appropriate legislation. Case(s) in point: S.2352, S. 2368, and H.R.7173, all of which are sitting with committees. S.2352, the “Healthy Family and Climate Security Act,” establishes a cap-and-trade program. S.2368, the “American Opportunity Carbon Free Act,” establishes a carbon tax. Both of these pieces of Senate legislation are currently with the Finance Committee. Neither Feinstein nor Harris are co-sponsors. H.R.7173, the “Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act,” sets a fee (which is rises annually) on the carbon content of fuels and products of those fuels that emit greenhouse gases. These fees would be placed in a trust to be distributed to U.S. citizens and residents. This legislation is with three House committees: Ways and Means, Energy and Commerce, and Foreign Affairs. Jimmy Panetta is not a cosponsor. (See the following write-up for an even bolder plan.) (Write-up 12/12/18)

**EXPLAIN** to key members of the Senate Finance Committee how crucial this legislation is to our national and planetary health

• **Senator Orin Hatch**, Chair, Senate Finance Committee, 219 Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510-6200, (202) 224-4515

• **Senator Ron Wyden**, Ranking Member, Senate Finance Committee, 219 Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510-6200, (202) 224-4515

**REQUEST** that our Senators become cosponsors of S.2352 and/or S.2368

• **Senator Dianne Feinstein** (D-CA), 331 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-3841

• **Senator Kamala Harris** (D-CA), 112 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-3553

**EXPLAIN** to key House committee members how crucial this legislation is to our national and planetary health

• **Representative Kevin Brady** (R-TX), Chair, House Ways and Means Committee, 1102

Longworth House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-3625

• **Representative Richard Neal** (D-MA), Ranking Member, House Ways and Means

Committee, 1102 Longworth House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-3625

• **Representative Greg Walden** (R-OR), Chair, House Energy and Commerce Committee, 2125, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-2927

• **Representative Joe Barton** (R-TX), Vice-Chair, House Energy and Commerce Committee, 2125 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-2927

• **Representative Frank Pallone** (D-NJ), Ranking Member, House Energy and Commerce Committee, 2125 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-2927

• **Representative Ed Royce** (R-CA), Chair, House Foreign Affairs Committee, 2170 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-5021

• **Representative Francis Rooney** (R-FL), Vice-Chair, House Foreign Affairs Committee, 2170 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-5021

• **Representative Ileana Ros-Lehtinen** (R-FL), Chair Emeritus, House Foreign Affairs Committee, 2170 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-5021

• **Representative Eliot Engel** (D-NY), Ranking Member, House Foreign Affairs Committee, 2170 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-5021

**REQUEST** that our Representative become a cosponsor of H.R.7173

• **Representative Jimmy Panetta** (D-CA), 228 Cannon House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-2861

If piece-meal efforts don’t seem to be enough (and they shouldn’t) we can push for the creation of a Select Committee on a Green New Deal. This committee would be tasked with writing a plan to fix the climate crisis within 10 years—a national, industrial, economic mobilization plan that will equitably transform our society and be in line with what scientists have made clear is necessary to avoid irreversible and catastrophic climate change. (Write-up 12/12/18)

**URGE** our Congresspeople to support a plan to stop the climate crisis that is threatening the planet

• **Senator Dianne Feinstein** (D-CA), 331 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-3841

• **Senator Kamala Harris** (D-CA), 112 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-3553

• **Representative Jimmy Panetta** (D-CA), 228 Cannon House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-2861

**ASK** likely incoming Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi to establish a Committee on a Green New Deal

• **Representative Nancy Pelosi** (D-CA), 233 Cannon House Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202-225-0100)

**ETHICS and SEPARATION of POWERS**

In a close vote, the Senate has passed S.J.Res.64, a resolution to overthrow a new Treasury Department policy that no longer requires some 501(c) tax-exempt nonprofits— including politically active 501(c)(4) “dark money” groups— to disclose donor names and addresses in tax returns submitted to the IRS. (Write-up 12/14/18)

**THANKS** to our senators for voting in favor of S.J.Res.64

• **Senator Dianne Feinstein** (D-CA), 331 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-3841

• **Senator Kamala Harris** (D-CA), 112 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-3553

**URGE** our Representative to support similar legislation

• **Representative Jimmy Panetta** (D-CA), 228 Cannon House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-2861

Russian Maria Butina has pled guilty to conspiring against our government in part by using NRA contacts to create back channel communications to conservative political groups. (Write-up 12/14/18)

**TELL** our Congresspeople that we expect them to fulfill their oaths and find our way to the bottom of these issues through true investigation and that we also expect them to protect the Mueller investigation.

• **Senator Dianne Feinstein** (D-CA), 331 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-3841

• **Senator Kamala Harris** (D-CA), 112 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-3553

• **Representative Jimmy Panetta** (D-CA), 228 Cannon House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-2861

Facing incoming Democrats as Governor and Attorney General, Wisconsin’s Republican-controlled legislature is doing all it can over the next few weeks to limit the powers of those two offices. There’s an important back story here that can be traced to a 2008 State Supreme Court Tax Ruling. In Walgreen vs. City of Madison (Walgreens won), the drugstore chain argued that it had a right to have the properties it held in Wisconsin to be valued for tax purposes not at their actual purchase prices or rent, but rather to be valued based on the value of similar, but vacant, stores nearby. This is called a “dark-store practice,” and in Wisconsin the impact of this ruling on cities and towns has been significant. Because of the profitability of “dark-store” style taxation, major businesses have been contributing significantly to Republicans in the state, in hopes of avoiding legislation that might supersede current practice. So now, as Wisconsin’s democracy faces a significant threat, a good part of the blame for the current make-up of the state’s legislature can be placed on those businesses that have been supporting. And which corporations are these? Some of the more significant players are Walgreens, Microsoft, Dr. Pepper Snapple, J.P. Morgan Chase, and Humana. (Write-up 12/12/18)

**TELL** these businesses that their financing of the democracy-quashing legislature leaves you with no choice but interest in purchasing or using their products and services

• **Alex Gourlay**, CEO, Walgreen Co., 200 Wilmot Rd, Deerfield, IL 60015, (800) WALLGREENS

• **Satya Nadella**, CEO, Microsoft Corp, 1 Microsoft Way, Redmond, WA 98052-6399, (425) 882-8080

• **Larry D. Young**, CEO, Dr. Pepper Snapple Group, P.O. Box 869077, Plano, TX 75086-9077, (972) 673-7000

• **Jamie Dimon**, CEO, JPMorgan Chase & Co., 270 Park Ave, New York, NY 10017-2014, (212) 270-6000

• **Bruce Broussard**, CEO, Humana, Inc, P.O. Box 14601, Louisville, KY 40202, (502) 580-1000

Congresswomen-elect Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Ayana Priestly, and Rashida Tlaib have raised concerns that the orientation for new Congress members included presentations from four corporate leaders and had no presence from labor or community activists. The orientation was sponsored by three groups: the Harvard Institute of Politics, the American Enterprise Institute, and the Center for Strategic and International Studies. (Write-up 12/12/18)

**DEMAND** that the sponsors make sure the next orientation for new members of Congress includes perspectives from all the constituents these people serve, not just from corporations and entrenched government officials

• **Harvard Institute of Politics**, 79 John F. Kennedy St., Cambridge, MA 02138, (617) 495-1360

• **American Enterprise Institute**, 1789 Massachusetts Ave. NW, Washington DC 20036, (202) 862-5800

• **Center for Strategic and International Studies**, 1616 Rhode Island Ave. NW, Washington DC 20036, (202) 887-0200

**FAMILY SEPARATION, DENATURALIZATION, and IMMIGRATION**

Via *Rogan’s List*: “Trump's xenophobic policies continue, this time against immigrants who fled to the U.S. during the Vietnam War. The Trump administration has reinterpreted a U.S.-Vietnam agreement from 2008, which protected Vietnamese immigrants who arrived in the U.S. prior to 1995 from deportation, and are now stating that there are no such protections, even for refugees. This means that people who have lived in the United States for nearly half of a century, and who may have been children when they arrived, are now at risk of deportation.” This move also raises the threat of more family separations as parents are deported while their U.S.-born children have the right to remain in the country. (Write-up 12/14/18)

**INSIST** to the White House and the Department of Homeland Security that they stop wasting their time and resources, and instead follow the 2008 agreement as originally agreed upon and stop deportation of Vietnamese immigrants

• **Donald Trump**, the White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Washington DC 50500, (202) 456-1111

• **Kirstjen M. Nielsen**, Secretary of Homeland Security, 245 Murray Lane SW, Washington DC 20528-0075, (202) 282-8494

**CALL** on our Congresspeople to respond to this inhumane proposal to reinterpret the 2008 agreement firmly and vocally

• **Senator Dianne Feinstein** (D-CA), 331 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-3841

• **Senator Kamala Harris** (D-CA), 112 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-3553

• **Representative Jimmy Panetta** (D-CA), 228 Cannon House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-2861

**From Indivisible: “Funding for a large part of the government expires on December 21, and Trump may decide to shut it down if he doesn’t get money for his wall.** Trump is throwing a temper tantrum, demanding $5 billion in funding from Congress for his unnecessary, xenophobic border wall—and to try to get his way, he is threatening to veto legislation from Congress that would keep the government running. This is a crisis entirely of Trump’s own making. So far, Chuck Schumer and Nancy Pelosi are standing strong against him, which is exactly what they should be doing. In a meeting with Trump on Dec. 11, they told him that they would not agree to **any new money for Trump’s wall, detention beds, or border agents.” One way to avoid such a shutdown would be to pass a Continuing Resolution** that funds the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) at its present level. For those of us who would like to see *reduced* DHS funding this might seem like a bitter pill, but it would be a way to shut down Trump’s wall tantrum. (Write-up 12/12/18)

**CALL** on our Congresspeople to avert a shutdown and deny Trump his wall funding by passing a year-long continuing resolution (CR) that funds the Department of Homeland Security at its present level

• **Senator Dianne Feinstein** (D-CA), 331 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-3841

• **Senator Kamala Harris** (D-CA), 112 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-3553

• **Representative Jimmy Panetta** (D-CA), 228 Cannon House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-2861

**GENERAL DECENCY**

According to the Congressional summary, the “American Family Act,” (S.2018), “amends the Internal Revenue Code, with respect to the child tax credit, to: (1) make the credit fully refundable, (2) increase the amount of the credit and allow an additional credit for children who are under six years of age, (3) require the amount of the credit to be adjusted annually for inflation after 2017, and (4) require the Department of the Treasury to establish a program for making advance payments of the credit on a monthly basis.” Basically, S.2018 would bring us up to par with countries like Canada, Germany, and Australia. Projections are that this legislation could cut child poverty in the U.S. by half. This legislation has not been getting the notice it deserves, but we can try to change that. S.2018 is currently with the Senate Finance Committee. Kamala Harris is a cosponsor; Dianne Feinstein is not. (Write-up 12/14/18)

**REQUEST** action on S.2018 from key members of the Senate Finance Committee

• **Senator Orrin G. Hatch** (R-UT), Chair, Senate Finance Committee, 219 Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-4515

• **Senator Ron Wyden** (D-OR), Ranking member, Senate Finance Committee, 219 Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-4515

**THANK** Harris for cosponsoring S.2018

• **Senator Kamala Harris** (D-CA), 112 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-3553

**REQUEST** that Feinstein also become a cosponsor of S.2018

• **Senator Dianne Feinstein** (D-CA), 331 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-3841

**GUNS**

The *BBC* reports: “This year, 113 people have been killed or injured in school shootings in the United States. That's the sobering finding of a project to count the annual toll of gun attacks in schools. At the beginning of 2018, Education Week, a journal covering education in the US, began to track school shootings—and has since recorded 23 incidents where there were deaths or injuries. With many parts of the US having about 180 school days per year, it means, on average, a shooting once every eight school days. Another database recording school shootings says 2018 has had the highest number of incidents ever recorded, in figures going back to 1970. That database, from the US Center for Homeland Defense and Security and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), uses a different way of identifying gun incidents in school, and says this year there have been 94.” Whichever figures we use, these numbers are unacceptable. (Write-up 12/14/18)

**REMIND** Congressional leaders that the vast majority of Americans favor reasonable gun control and that we’re still waiting for Congress to take meaningful action

• **Senator Mitch McConnell** (R-KY), Senate Majority Leader, 217 Russell Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-2541

• **Senator Chuck Schumer** (D-NY), Senate Minority Leader, 332 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-6542

• **Representative Paul Ryan** (R-WI), Speaker of the House, 1233 Longworth House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-3031

• **Representative Nancy Pelosi** (D-CA), House Minority Leader, 233 Cannon House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-4965

**HEALTH and HEALTHCARE**

A U.S. appeals court blocked Republican administration rules that made it easier for employers to opt out of providing birth control as part of their employee health insurance coverage. When the Affordable Care Act went into effect during the Obama administration, only religious organizations were allowed to opt out of providing birth control coverage. Trump-era rule changes had extended this option to most companies, including publicly traded companies, to deny birth control coverage on religious grounds. These changes also offered privately held companies the broader option of denying birth control coverage on “moral,” not just religious, grounds. The law suit that brought about this ruling was initiated by a group of State Attorneys General led by California’s Xavier Becerra. (Write-up 12/14/18)

**THANKS** to our Attorney General for once again protecting us from some of the worst moves of the current Republican administration

• **Attorney General Xavier Becerra**, 1300 I St., Sacramento, CA 95814-2919, (916) 445-9555

California’s A.B.31 would exempt from taxation “the sale in this state of, and the storage, use, or other consumption in this state of, tampons, sanitary napkins, menstrual sponges, and menstrual cups.” If approved, this legislation would take effect in 2020. (Write-up 12/14/18)

**URGE** your assembly member to support A.B.31.

• **Assembly Member Robert Rivas** [for Watsonville], 275 Main St., Suite 400, Watsonville, CA 95076, (831) 768-3035

• **Assembly Member Mark Stone** [for Santa Cruz], 701 Ocean St., 318-B, Santa Cruz, CA 95060, (831) 425-1503

The *Santa Cruz Sentinel* reports “Inmates who seek medical care from inside California’s prisons and jails are required to pay a $5 co-pay per visit — a cost that, on its surface, seems relatively low. But with the minimum wage inside state prisons at just 8 cents an hour, inmates without financial support from the outside can be forced to work more than 60 hours to afford a single visit for medical, dental or mental health care.” The relatively high cost means that people don't get medical care, become sicker, and actually cost us all more (besides the fact that everyone should have healthcare).

**TELL** our State Legislators that we want to see prison healthcare become more affordable for inmates through raised wages and/or waived fees

• **Senator Bill Monning**, 701 Ocean St., 318-A, Santa Cruz, CA 95060, (831) 425-1503

• **Assembly Member Robert Rivas** [for Watsonville], 275 Main St., Suite 400, Watsonville, CA 95076, (831) 768-3035

• **Assembly Member Mark Stone** [for Santa Cruz], 701 Ocean St., 318-B, Santa Cruz, CA 95060, (831) 425-1503

**HUMAN and CIVIL RIGHTS**

After a series of short-term extensions, the 115th Congress has allowed the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) to expire. This failure again demonstrates the Republican administration’s disdain for protecting the marginalized. (Write-up 12/14/18)

TELL incoming Congressional leadership and our Congresspeople that we want the 116th Congress to prioritize restoring VAWA

• **Senator Mitch McConnell** (R-KY), Senate Majority Leader, 217 Russell Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-2541

• **Senator Chuck Schumer** (D-NY), Senate Minority Leader, 332 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-6542

• **Representative Nancy Pelosi** (D-CA), House Minority Leader [and probably Speaker], 233 Cannon House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-4965

• **Senator Dianne Feinstein** (D-CA), 331 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-3841

• **Senator Kamala Harris** (D-CA), 112 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-3553

• **Representative Jimmy Panetta** (D-CA), 228 Cannon House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-2861

**INTERNATIONAL**

Both of California’s Senators voted in favor of the recently passed Senate resolution to end U.S. assistance to Saudi Arabia in the Yemen war. The resolution also puts the blame for the murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi on Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman. This important move challenges Trump’s repeated claims that Salman was not involved in the murder. (Write-up 12/14/18)

**THANKS** to

• **Senator Dianne Feinstein** (D-CA), 331 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-3841

• **Senator Kamala Harris** (D-CA), 112 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-3553

Via *Rogan’s List*: Trump’s nominee for CEO of the US Agency for Global Media, which runs Voice of America (VOA) as well as other government broadcasting networks (like Radio Free Europe, Radio Free Asia, and Middle East Broadcasting Networks), is Michael Pack, a Steve Bannon collaborator who has condemned liberal “political correctness” and runs a conservative filmmaking business. VOA alone is heard by 275 million people in over 47 different languages; recent legislation concentrates authority with the agency’s chief executive and would replace its current bipartisan board with an advisory council. The Senate has yet to ratify Pack’s nomination, so this is the time to make sure our senators oppose the appointment of a flagrantly right-wing ideologue to oversee the agency that represents the US to the world. (Write-up 12/14/18)

**CALL** on our Senators to fiercely and vocally oppose this confirmation

• **Senator Dianne Feinstein** (D-CA), 331 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-3841

• **Senator Kamala Harris** (D-CA), 112 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-3553