



November 11, 2024

Dear Mr. Lutnick and Ms. McMahon,

I am writing to you as the president of the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission (ERLC). The ERLC represents the public policy interests of the Southern Baptist Convention, the largest Protestant denomination in the United States with over 45,000 churches and nearly 13 million members.

Let me begin by offering my personal congratulations for your victory in this recent election. Our team is committed to praying for you, President Trump, and for an efficient transition of power.

This letter highlights five critical policy actions that reflect deeply held values for Southern Baptists and warrant the incoming administration's immediate attention during President Trump's first 100 days in office. All of these options represent positive opportunities to shape public policy in helpful and constructive ways at the outset of a second term that we believe merit strong consideration for inclusion in President Trump's initial agenda.

To effectively implement these policies, it is crucial that the Trump administration also reinstates a strong Faith and Opportunity Initiative and prioritizes leadership appointments and staff who are steadfast in their commitment to upholding the value of life and religious liberty, especially within the Departments of Health and Human Services, State, Labor, Education, and Veteran Affairs.

**1. Reaffirm continued support for and fully enforce the Hyde Amendment across government agencies.**

Throughout his first presidential term, the President-elect continually reaffirmed the importance of appropriations provisions like the Hyde Amendment to ensure taxpayer dollars do not fund abortion. By issuing an executive order committing to full enforcement of the Hyde Amendment, President Trump will usher in a renewed focus on protecting life and the deeply-held religious beliefs of taxpayers from government overreach. Such action should explicitly direct federal agencies to stop the [funding of abortion-related travel](#) and [counseling for abortions](#) through immediately ceasing such policies and implementing rulemaking as necessary.

**2. Reimplement the Protecting Life in Global Health Assistance policy and similar Title X pro-life domestic policies.**

Several government programs, such as USAID and Title X, provide contracts or grants for family planning and related projects. The ERLC asks the Trump administration to reinstate the [Protecting](#)



[Life in Global Health Assistance Policy](#) (formerly known as the Mexico City Policy) and [similar Title X policies](#) previously implemented in the President's first term, which barred any entities that perform or counsel for abortions domestically and abroad from receiving government funds.

**3. Revoke Executive Order 13988, [Preventing and Combating Discrimination on the Basis of Gender Identity or Sexual Orientation](#).**

This [executive order](#) by the Biden administration redefines "sex-based discrimination" to include sexual orientation and gender identity while directing all federal agencies to implement this new definition through rulemaking. Such rulemaking was specifically crafted to circumvent the religious beliefs and conscience protections of millions of Americans regarding gender and sexuality, misuse taxpayer funds for "gender transitions," and promote radical gender ideology, even amongst children. By undoing this harmful executive order, President Trump will reassure millions of Americans that they will not be targeted by the federal government simply for believing in biological realities or holding to their religious convictions.

**4. Undo the anti-life, anti-religious liberty, and pro-gender ideology rulemaking advanced by the Biden administration.**

In addition to rescinding the aforementioned executive order, the Trump administration can easily begin fulfilling this goal by undoing many of the harmful rules promulgated by the Biden administration and ceasing in any related federal litigation, starting with the following:

- "[Nondiscrimination in Health Programs and Activities](#)," by the Department of Health and Human Services. The ERLC's public comments are available [here](#).
- "[Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex in Education Programs or Activities Receiving Federal Financial Assistance](#)," by the Department of Education. The ERLC's public comments are available [here](#).
- "[Designated Placement Requirements Under Titles IV-E and IV-B for LGBTQI+ Children](#)," by the Department of Health and Human Services. The ERLC's public comments are available [here](#).

**5. Reverse the Biden FDA's changes to the risk evaluation management strategy (REMS) requirements for mifepristone that expanded the reach of the abortion pill and threaten the health and safety of women.**

Throughout the Biden administration, the FDA took multiple actions to expand "access" to the chemical abortion drug, mifepristone. Despite the fact that [1 in 5 women](#) who take mifepristone likely will experience medical complications, the FDA disregarded the health and safety of women in



pursuit of its abortion agenda. [Moves were made](#) to allow prescription of the drug through telehealth without ever seeing a doctor in-person and to allow dispensing of the drug at local pharmacies.

We eagerly anticipate the day when the abortion pill is recognized for the evil it is and prohibited, and we encourage the President-elect to, at a minimum, swiftly reverse these changes made by the Biden administration.

We look forward to working with you, President Trump, and new members of the administration in the coming days.

Respectfully,

F. Brent Leatherwood  
President  
Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission  
of the Southern Baptist Convention