



CIRCLE *of* PROTECTION

January 29, 2026

Dear Senator:

We write to you as the Circle of Protection, a coalition of national church bodies and related ministries representing the diversity of Christianity in this country. The organizations in the Circle together have 100 million members. Nearly all our churches help people in need, and we work together to protect government programs and policies that help poor and vulnerable people. Jesus urged us to help people who are hungry or sick or in need in other ways (Matthew 25).

We commend congressional appropriators and appreciate the work that has gone into passing bipartisan, bicameral appropriations bills. Elements of several of these bills align with many of our priorities and prevent the previously proposed deep cuts that would have devastated programs serving those most in need. We especially want to highlight the strong funding for PEPFAR and global health, international food aid, and other critical foreign assistance programs.

Yet, at the same time, we have watched in horror as individuals have been assaulted and killed for peacefully exercising their constitutional rights at the hands of ICE and CBP officers. Community members are being detained regardless of immigration status, even citizenship, young children are being sent to detention centers, and families, fearing for their safety, are staying home, missing work, school, groceries, and church. We know that these incidents have not been limited to Minneapolis, and while our pastors and congregants will continue to serve and do all they can to support their communities, we need Congress to step in.

We support needed protections for people from ICE agents' behavior, or guardrails in these appropriations bills. We call on Congress to assert more accountability in the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) spending bill. No federal funds should be allowed to violate the dignity of any human being, immigrants or U.S. citizens, let alone to the point of death.

Genesis reminds us that we are each made in the image of a most loving God. We call on Congress to make sure our governing policies and federal budget reflect that.

Dr. Paul Baxley, Executive Coordinator, Cooperative Baptist Fellowship

Rev. Dr. David Beckmann, Dean's Advisor, Virginia Theological Seminary; Coordinator, Circle of Protection

John Carr, Founder, Initiative on Catholic Social Thought and Public Life, Georgetown University

Rev. Eugene Cho, President and CEO, Bread for the World

Rev. Dr. Walter Kim, President, National Association of Evangelicals

Rev. Carlos Malavé, President, Latino Christian National Network

Bishop Vashti Murphy McKenzie, President, National Council of Churches

Bridget Moix, General Secretary, Friends Committee on National Legislation

Monica Schaap Pierce, Executive Director, Christian Churches Together

Rev. Amy Reumann, Senior Director, Witness in Society, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Rev. Dr. Gabriel Salguero, President and Founder, National Latino Evangelical Coalition

Rev. Adam Russell Taylor, President, Sojourners

Bishop Julius C. Trimble, General Secretary, General Board of Church and Society, United Methodist Church

Rev. Jim Wallis, Inaugural Chair and Founding Director, Center on Faith and Justice, Georgetown University

Dr. Barbara Williams-Skinner, Co-Convener, National African American Clergy Network; President, Skinner Leadership Institute

Alan Yarborough, Director of Government Relations, The Episcopal Church