



CIRCLE of PROTECTION

February 19, 2026

To Members of the Senate and House Appropriations Committees,

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 are grateful that Congress and the President have approved FY2026 appropriations for nearly the entire government, and for the way this was done. You made careful appropriations decisions through bipartisan negotiations, with contributions from members of both parties. We now urge you to be active in oversight - ensuring that the Administration implements the programs that have been funded.

Given our coalition's focus on funding decisions that affect people in poverty, we are especially grateful that the international aid package in this month's funding bill directs the Administration to revive our country's aid program. Oversight will be especially needed on aid issues, since programming has been disrupted and administrative capacity lost.

We also appreciate the time Congress is taking to develop guardrails for ICE, so that it conducts its operations with due respect for the safety, dignity and rights of agents, immigrants, and U.S. citizens alike. This is important in itself and will also help to prevent inappropriate uses of armed federal agents and the military in domestic governance generally.

In accordance with I Timothy 2:2, we pray for you and "all those in authority that we may lead godly and peaceful lives."

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. Chris Kellerman, S.J., Secretary of Justice and Ecology, Jesuit Conference of
Canada and the United States**

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

Rev. Carlos Malavé, President, Latino Christian National Network

Bridget Moix, General Secretary, Friends Committee on National Legislation

Bishop Vashti Murphy McKenzie, President, National Council of Churches

**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**