

PEOPLE OF FAITH DEFEATING AMENDMENT ONE



ON MAY 8, 2012, NORTH CAROLINIANS WILL VOTE ON WHETHER OR NOT TO WRITE
HARMS TO CHILDREN AND FAMILIES INTO OUR CONSTITUTION. JOIN THE COALITION TO DEFEAT AMENDMENT ONE
AND PROTECT ALL NORTH CAROLINA FAMILIES.

The toolkit has been prepared by the **North Carolina Council of Churches** in collaboration with **People of Faith to Protect ALL NC Families**. It is intended to enable people of faith to be effective in their opposition to Amendment One. In it, you will find information about the Amendment and its impact on North Carolinians, what you need to know in order to register and vote and to get others to do the same, and additional suggested action steps you can take to help defeat this discriminatory measure.

People of Faith to Protect ALL NC Families is a statewide network of congregations, interfaith alliances, denominations and people of all faiths working with The Coalition of Protect ALL NC Families in the campaign to defeat Amendment One at the polls on **May 8**. If you want your congregation or other faith organization to be involved with the Coalition, contact Director of Faith Outreach Ryan Rowe:
ryan@protectncfamilies.org.



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INTRODUCTION

Thank you for putting your faith and love into action to stop Amendment One. We hope this toolkit will help you get informed, get connected to your local campaign office and interfaith alliance, and get equipped with tools and next steps for getting your faith group engaged! We are inspired by the ways you have already put your faith into action.

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW:

In September 2011, the North Carolina State General Assembly passed a bill asking residents of our state to vote on amending our state constitution to read “**marriage between one man and one woman is the only domestic legal union that shall be valid or recognized in this State.**” Known as Amendment One, our state will take this vote as part of the **May 8th, 2012** primary election. Amendment One is an extreme version of such “marriage” amendments because it also will outlaw all forms of legal relationship recognition for unmarried couples, and will lead to harmful and unintended consequences for our children and all unmarried families.

You join a growing chorus of People of Faith AGAINST Amendment One!

**The North Carolina Council of Churches
The North Carolina NAACP, Religious Affairs
The North Carolina Episcopal Diocese
Standing on the Side of Love
North Carolina Unitarian Universalists Organizing to Protect ALL Families
Methodist Federation for Social Action
The Baptist Peace Fellowship
People of Faith for Just Relationships (Asheville)
Interfaith Voice (Winston Salem)
Clergy For Equality (Charlotte)
The Religious Coalition of Orange and Durham Against Amendment 1 (R-CODA-A1)
People of Faith Against Amendment One (Raleigh)**

CAN MY CONGREGATION OR MY FAITH COMMUNITY SPEAK OUT ABOUT AMENDMENT ONE?



The simple answer is, yes! If you're a clergy leader of a congregation or the head of a nonprofit faith organization, you know your tax-exempt status is important to protect. While the tax code is quite clear that tax-exempt organizations cannot "participate in, or intervene in any political campaign on behalf of a candidate for public office," **Amendment One is a ballot measure, not a candidate campaign, and therefore nonprofits, clergy, and congregations are all legally allowed to publicly denounce Amendment One, donate to The Coalition to Protect ALL NC Families, and organize your congregation members to defeat this harmful amendment.**

Political Activity	Congregations	Clergy as Individuals
Discuss Amendment One from the pulpit or in a sermon.	Yes	Yes
Make a public statement denouncing Amendment One.	Yes	Yes
Distribute literature about Amendment One at your house of worship.	Yes	Yes
Host an event or action (faith rally, phone bank, fund raiser) against Amendment One.	Yes	Yes
Donate money, space, time or other in-kind contributions to The Coalition to Protect NC Families or other non-profits working to defeat Amendment One.	Yes	Yes
In-kind or monetary contributions to a political candidate-or his/her campaign-who is currently running for public office.	No	Yes
Contributions to Political Action Committees (PAC). <i>(The Coalition to Protect ALL NC Families is a nonprofit 501(c)4, not a PAC)</i>	No	Yes

According to US Tax Code, the key to maintaining proper 501(c)(3) status for churches is to make sure time and expenses for the Amendment One effort are not substantial relative to the total church budget and activities. A safe threshold is to keep it under 5%. However, keep in mind the absolute prohibition on supporting or opposing candidates for public office, political parties, or other partisan activities.

For more information on what political activities 501(c)(3)'s and churches are legally allowed to engage in, visit the Internal Revenue Service's (IRS) web site at <http://1.usa.gov/wiKPr0>.

*Taken from irs.gov "The Restriction of Political Campaign Intervention by Section 501(c)(3) Tax-Exempt Organizations" and [Ourfaithourvote.com](http://ourfaithourvote.com) "Guidelines for Congregations and Clergy on Political Action."

ONE MILLION CONVERSATIONS

As people of faith, we are called to speak out against injustice, to foster unity, and to demonstrate and protect love in all its forms. The campaign AGAINST Amendment One, The Coalition to Protect All NC Families, has a goal of having ONE MILLION conversations to help us defeat Amendment One. The primary motivator that leads people to action—to vote—is not facts and figures but a personal connection to someone like you. **You can have the greatest impact by always beginning your story with “As a person of faith...” and by speaking authentically from your faith tradition.** The points below can help you start your conversations:

FACT: Amendment One will constitutionally limit the definition of family to a marriage between one man and one woman and thereby lead to harmful unintended consequences for our children and all unmarried families. It will take away legal protections, health care and prescription benefits for many children and their parents. Unmarried women, children of unmarried couples, and senior widow(er)s will be harmed the most.

FACT: The amendment will harm the children of all unmarried families. Children of all unmarried couples, including gay and lesbian couples, will be at risk of losing their legal protections and benefits like health care.

FACT: Domestic abuse protections for unmarried women will be put at risk. Because this amendment only legally recognizes married families, unmarried women will be at risk of losing domestic abuse protections against their unmarried partners.

FACT: Amendment One will hurt senior widow(er)s living with unmarried partners. The amendment will force elder widow(er)s who have found new love to choose between benefits, like Social Security from their previous marriage, and legal protections of their new domestic partnership, which will not be legally recognized.

JUSTICE

FAITH: Basic human dignity comes from God without exclusion or favor. Excluding some of God’s children from full legal protections is an affront to God’s call to do justice. As people of faith, we are called to be a prophetic voice to speak God’s truth and educate others on the real harms of this amendment.

UNITY

FAITH: Amendment One supporters claim it represents God’s will and then condone its harms. NC’s people of faith have the power to speak out against this injustice and continue a tradition of leading people away from harmful division and towards higher moral ground of unity and love.

LOVE

FAITH: As people of faith, we support ALL families joined together by love and commitment. ALL families deserve legal protections regardless of one’s theological positions.

FAITH: People of faith cannot stand by and do nothing when the ability for some to provide for and protect their loved ones is threatened. We must vote our conscience, share our stories and donate our time, money and talents to defeating Amendment One. Vote AGAINST harming children and unmarried families, vote AGAINST Amendment One.

For more FACTS on the harms of Amendment One: www.protectncfamilies.org/issues

ORGANIZING YOUR CONGREGATION OR FAITH COMMUNITY

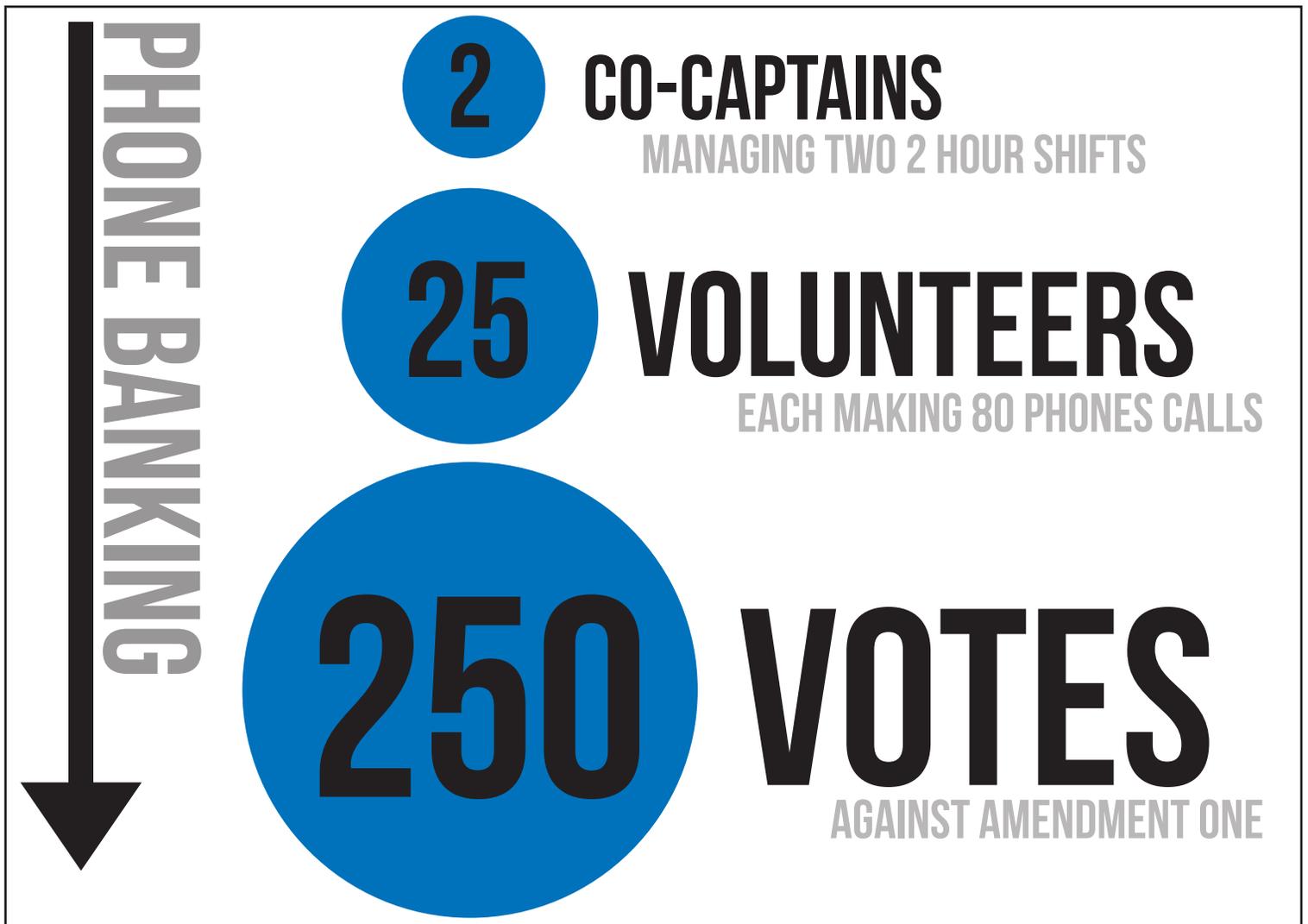
Your faith community is essential to helping us defeat Amendment One. Not only do you bring a voice of moral authority to the conversation, you bring volunteers who can speak to their neighbors with the conviction of their faith. Now is the time we must organize a host of volunteers for justice, unity and love in order to defeat Amendment One.

Three simple steps for organizing your congregation:

1. **Identify co-captains** to lead your congregational organizing.
2. **Sign up volunteers** from your faith community.
3. **Schedule a meeting with your local Protect ALL NC Families Faith Field Organizer.** They will train you and your volunteers on how to run a successful phone bank, and will get them connected to a range of volunteer activities including registering voters, getting voter pledge cards signed, doing data entry, writing letters to the editor, holding house parties, and raising money. To be put in touch with your local faith organizer, contact, Deputy Field Director, Sam Parker at sam@protectncfamilies.org.

The role of the co-captain is to:

- Recruit volunteers within your congregation or faith community. Ask these volunteers to help register voters, get voter pledge cards, signed and sign up to phone bank on the volunteer sign-up sheet provided.
- Work with an assigned Protect ALL North Carolina Families Field Organizer to set up a phone bank with your volunteers and to get out the vote in your neighborhoods to defeat Amendment One.



ACTION STEPS TOWARD DEFEATING AMENDMENT ONE

Register to Vote

It is important that all of our supporters—those who want to defeat Amendment One—are registered to vote. You can play a significant role by ensuring everyone in your faith community is registered. Get registration forms from your local library or board of elections, bring them to your faith community, and ask people to register to vote or re-register if they have moved since the last election. Voter registration forms for the state of North Carolina can be found at this web address: bit.ly/xtjrSd

You cannot simply walk into the polls on Election Day and vote. You must first register, using the address where you live, and providing information about your eligibility.

Fortunately, in North Carolina, registering to vote is easy and there are many different ways to register to vote. For on-line links to voter information go to: www.democracy-nc.org/voting/registering.html

There are several different ways you can register to vote or change your voter registration:

- Visit your local board of elections during regular business hours to register.
- Download a registration form and mail it to your local board of elections – Election law requires that this be postmarked by April 13, 2012-25 days before the election.
- Obtain a voter registration form at any public library – local policies will vary on whether they will turn the form in for you or if you need to turn it in or mail it to your local board of elections yourself.
- If you are a student, be aware that many high schools and colleges also have registration forms.
- Obtain a voter registration form at your local Social Services or Public Health Department.

In 2007, North Carolina enacted what is called Same Day Registration. This registration option allows people to either register for the first time or change their name and address information up until three days before an election by visiting an official Early Voting site with proper I.D. You can even register and vote on the same day. To find the location and hours of Early Voting sites, you will need to contact your local board of elections- a list can be found at this web address: bit.ly/zXULn

The deadline to register to vote is 25 days before Election Day. For the May 8 election, the **registration deadline is: April 13, 2012**. If you miss this deadline, you may still “same day” register and vote during the early voting period.

Pledge to Vote Against Amendment One

Protect ALL NC Families has developed voter pledge cards to help us identify those who pledge to vote AGAINST Amendment One. Please print out and have the members of your faith community sign these cards and give them to the campaign field organizer who will be working with you and your congregation. Make sure all the information is filled out on these cards. This will enable our campaign to contact the voter to ensure they vote on May 8, 2012.

Sign Up to Phone Bank

Our job before May 8th is to talk to as many North Carolina voters as we can, as many times as we can, to earn their support in defeating Amendment One. Phone banks are the FASTEST AND MOST EFFECTIVE way to talk directly to voters. These conversations are extremely important, and your contact with a voter may be the only time that voter hears from our campaign before they head to the polls on Election Day.

Why our campaign is holding hundreds of phone banks across the state:

- Identify supporters and undecided voters
- Persuade undecided voters
- Recruit new volunteers
- Get our supporters out to vote:
- Fastest way to reach a high volume of potential voters

The Campaign Field Organizer with whom you work will help get your congregation set up effective phone banks either at your place of worship, in a community or office building in your area, or at one of our regional campaign offices. They will provide lists of people to call, scripts for volunteers to use, and training on how to complete an effective phone bank.

Write a Letter to the Editor

Writing a Letter to the Editor (LTE) is an important way to communicate your thoughts on how Amendment One will harm unmarried families and children. As a person of faith, your letter to the editor is an especially critical way to show faith-based opposition to Amendment One. ALWAYS BEGIN YOUR LETTER WITH: "As a person of faith... (or as a Methodist, a Baptist, etc.)" It takes just a few minutes to write an LTE to your local paper.

Observe the following guidelines when writing an LTE:

- Submit your letter to your local paper. Review the talking points in this toolkit.
- Letters should be 150 words or fewer.
- Include your name, address and phone.
- Make your letter personal or link it to a recent article in the paper if you can.
- Never use obscenity, attack or belittle an opponent or group. Be positive.
- Always say why you are going to vote AGAINST Amendment One.

Submitting your letter

- Most papers have a web site through which you can submit your letter. Look for the opinion section or a specific link that will direct you on how to submit your letter. If confused, call the paper and ask them how to submit the letter.
- We encourage you to send a copy of your draft LTE to ryan@protectncfamilies.org so that our communications team can lend feedback on content and more tips for getting your LTE accepted.

Contributions to and Fundraising for the Coalition to Protect ALL NC Families

The Coalition to Protect ALL NC Families is a 501(c)(4) organization for tax purposes. This means two important things to you and your congregation. 1) Contributions to (c)(4) organizations by individuals are not tax-deductible. 2) If you or your congregation wishes to engage in fundraising for the benefit of the Coalition to Protect All NC Families, there are specific rules which you and the Coalition MUST follow. To find out more about fundraising as a congregation for the Coalition email their Director of Faith Outreach, Ryan Rowe, at ryan@protectncfamilies.org.

I pledge to **VOTE AGAINST** Amendment One.
It denies protections to all unmarried couples, strips benefits from their
children, and hurts NC families.
My signature below is my pledge to

VOTE AGAINST AMENDMENT ONE

Print Name

Phone

Email

Street

City, State, Zip

Faith Community

@

Twitter

Signed: _____



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CHECKLIST



Complete these Steps to Get Your Congregation or Faith Group Involved

- Identify Campaign Co-Captains
Name _____ Name _____
Phone Number _____ Phone Number _____
Email _____ Email _____
- Set up a one-on-one meeting with your local Campaign Field Organizer.
To identify your local Field Organizer, contact Deputy Field Director, Sam Parker at sam@protectncfamilies.org. Let her know you are a co-captain of your congregation and where you are located, so she can connect you to the nearest Field Organizer.
- Connect the Campaign to your clergy leader: Contact ryan@protectncfamilies.org
- Set Goals for your Congregation or Group
-Voter registration goal _____ -Pledge card goal _____
-Volunteers for phone banking goal _____ -Letters to the editor goal _____
-Number of stories shared with friends, family, neighbors, coworkers, etc. goal _____
-Collected Donations goal _____
- Identify unmarried families in your congregation who may be harmed by this amendment and connect them to the Campaign Field Organizer working with your congregation.
- Pick up blank voter registration forms from your local library, county board of elections or download from www.democracy-nc.org/voting/registering.html.
- Ask members of your congregation to register to vote, sign a pledge card, and sign up to volunteer.

For other questions contact: Ryan Rowe, Director of Faith Outreach, at ryan@protectncfamilies.org or 919-274-3203