



Opposing Kavanaugh: A Conversation Guide

We cannot afford to have a Supreme Court that does not uphold the separation of church and state, which is the linchpin of religious freedom. The latest nominee to the Supreme Court, Judge Brett Kavanaugh, however, has a demonstrated track record of hostility toward church-state separation that should make him ineligible for the position. The Senate must reject him.

Americans United is working alongside many organizations that oppose Brett Kavanaugh for a variety of reasons. With so many reasons to oppose this nomination, it is important that we work to ensure Kavanaugh's opposition to church-state separation is highlighted and articulated by all those who oppose him.

Therefore, one of the most important things we can do to stop Kavanaugh's appointment to the Supreme Court is to connect with others who can share our concerns for preserving church-state separation and recruit them to join us and take action. *The goal of these conversations is to provide space for friends of the church-state separation movement to discover their own passion for church-state separation as a reason for their opposition to Judge Brett Kavanaugh.*

Connect:

- **Identify** people who value religious freedom for all people – both people who are religious and nonreligious – and who hate seeing it used as a weapon to harm others, but who have yet to make church-state separation an articulated reason for their opposition to Kavanaugh (i.e., they oppose his appointment for other reasons, but not this one). Church-state separation intersects with many other legitimate reasons for opposing Kavanaugh (protecting reproductive rights, civil rights, etc.), so we simply want to raise the importance of church-state separation and not replace other reasons with our own.
- **Invite** them to grab coffee, or lunch, or just to catch up on the latest Supreme Court news. Be open about the fact that you want to talk with them about why you oppose the Kavanaugh pick for the Supreme Court. This isn't about tricking them – it is about **connecting** with them and seeing if part of the concern they have about this choice is his views towards church-state separation.
- If you feel unsure, then **invite** one or two people who you know already share your passion for church-state separation to go with you.
- Read through the three-pager entitled, [Americans United Opposes the Nomination of Brett Kavanaugh](#). When you meet with your friend, bring it with you in case they want to know more about Kavanaugh's stances on church-state separation issues.
- Use the questions below as a guide, but feel free to allow the conversation to move forward organically. We don't want this to be a script you have to stick to.

Instead, these are good suggestions to spur conversation. Have a goal to keep the conversation under an hour. If you have only gotten through one or two of the questions, then no problem. Remember, the goal is to provide space for friends of the church-state separation movement to discover their own passion for church-state separation as a reason for their opposition to Judge Brett Kavanaugh.

- Feel free to share your own stories while at the same time be careful you do not take over the conversation. We want most of the talking to come from our friend as they wrestle with the questions to discover their own reasons for how church-state separation affects them.

Questions for the Conversation:

- One reason I have a hard time thinking about Kavanaugh being on the Supreme Court is that he has sided with employers who use their religion to refuse to grant employees needed access to birth control. How would you feel if your employer had the right to deny you basic healthcare based on his/her own personal religious beliefs? Has this ever happened to you or anyone you know?
- It's likely that if he sides with religious employers to deny access to healthcare, he could be willing to find that religious exemptions are acceptable in other areas like denying services to LGBTQ people and religious minorities. Would this affect you personally or someone you know? How would you feel if this were to happen?
- Judge Kavanaugh also has proposed that public schools have the right to require students to listen to school-sponsored prayer delivered by other students. Have you ever witnessed or know anyone who has witnessed school-sponsored prayer? How did it make you feel? How do you think those who don't share the religious views of the person praying felt?
- The danger of a Kavanaugh appointment is that he believes that taxpayer dollars should be used to fund religious organizations doing religious activities. How does it make you feel that your taxpayer dollars could be used to fund churches and other religious entities?

Recruit:

- As the conversation ends, make sure you save time to ask them if they would join you in calling BOTH of their Senators (202-224-3121) and use this suggested script:

As a constituent, I urge Senator _____ to oppose Brett Kavanaugh to the Supreme Court. Judge Kavanaugh appears receptive to the dangerous argument that religious freedom includes a right to use religion to harm others, and his record shows he will likely weaken our fundamental value of religious freedom for all. We need a court that will represent all of us, not just the interests of those with a particular set of religious beliefs. Therefore, please vote no.

- But to grow the movement to support church-state separation we must multiply the number of these conversations, as well as calls to Senate offices. So, after you ask them to call BOTH of their Senators, ask them who else might

be good to reach out to for this conversation. When they give a name or two (or several), ask them if they would be willing to either join you or to have this conversation with someone they named, or if they are willing to lead one or two of the conversations themselves. Tell them you have the resources to help them lead it. If you do recruit someone to help with conversations, then be sure and follow up with them a week or so later to see if the conversation took place and how they went. Celebrate with them for leading the conversation!

- With every person you discover who is passionate about this issue, there is the potential to inspire them to not only join your Team, but to think of other people who might also be interested.
- Movements always start with **identifying** people who share our passion, inviting them in, and **recruiting** them to join you in **inviting** others.