



Dear Chapter Members, NLC Members & Supporters:

Americans United has a long history of fighting to safeguard our First Amendment guarantee of religious freedom. That freedom was dealt a severe blow in *Town of Greece v. Galloway*, when the Supreme Court ruled 5-4 that opening prayers at town and county council meetings do not violate the Constitution – even if they routinely promote Christianity.

That's the bad news.

The good news is that we can still fight back! The Court left in place some protections regarding prayer, and it is up to us to make sure that city and county councils don't step over the line.

Last week we announced AU's campaign to push back against this egregious U.S. Supreme Court decision and now we need **you to join us in OPERATION INCLUSION!**

To make **Operation Inclusion** successful, we need to mobilize all of our AU Chapters, NLC members, and activists across the country. AU National will provide information and materials, but we need "boots on the ground." Can we count you in?

We really need all hands on deck to:

EXPLORE whether and to what extent local governments engage in prayer before public meetings. **Can you help us learn what your city or county council does regarding prayer?** Do they begin meetings with a prayer? Are the prayers inclusive, or do they advance a single religion? Do local leaders strive for diversity among prayer-givers, or are they inviting only Christians to deliver prayers? Maybe your local government doesn't open with prayer – that's important to know, too.

Once you have learned what's going on, here are the next steps:

FIGHT every attempt by Religious Right zealots to infiltrate local governing bodies that do not now begin their meetings with prayer. There are thousands of local councils that are firmly committed to maintaining the wall of separation between church and state. We are developing guidelines to help them maintain the church-state wall as the only true way to guarantee *the inclusion of all members of their diverse populations in the business of governance.*

Can you help distribute these guidelines to local governments that do not currently open their meetings with prayer?

EDUCATE municipal boards, state lawmakers and the public about the boundaries of this ruling. We are developing legal guidelines based on the *Greece* decision regarding what is permissible and what is not allowed. **Can you help get these guidelines into the hands of policymakers in your region or state?**

MOBILIZE to certify that the rules are being followed and that minority perspectives – including non-Christian and non-theist viewpoints – are not discriminated against by towns and counties that offer prayer before meetings. We don't think official prayer belongs at government meetings, but the Supreme Court ruled against us. **Can you help identify clergy or representatives from minority faiths or non-theists to get on the list to give an opening “prayer/invocation”? Is a municipality discriminating against would-be speakers or excluding speakers based on their religious beliefs? Report back to us with the results.**

AU will INVESTIGATE all violations that come to our attention. Our Legal team will research the circumstances, inform violators of the parameters of the Court's decision, and take legal action whenever and wherever violations warrant, *to ensure that all who wish to speak out are included.*

To assist you we have prepared an Operation Inclusion Action Kit. Included in the kit are:

- Basic Legal Guidelines & Talking Points
- [Model policy guide](#) to share with city and county councils
- Sample letter-to-the-editor
- Sample opinion piece
- Sample secular message to share during council prayer time
- Social media images to share on Facebook and Twitter
- Link to our [‘Report A Violation’](#) web form
- Link to our [‘Share Your Experience’](#) web form

Please get involved and invite others to join us in this effort!

We know this ruling is out of step with the realities of modern-day America. We know this is a country where pluralism and diversity are expanding every day, and a Supreme Court decision that gives the green light to ‘majority rules’ prayer at local governments is just wrong! We must push back!

Please take a look at the information provided in [this kit](#). It outlines the protections that are still in place and gives you resources for responding. There is also a link on the AU web site where you can [report a violation](#) if needed.

AU is successful because we have the support of over 100,000 members and supporters across the country. **Operation Inclusion** is a grassroots effort whose success depends on members like you. Please join the effort!

Thank you for all that you do for AU and thank you in advance for pitching in with **Operation Inclusion!**

If you have any questions, the AU Field Department is here to help you. You can call us at 202-466-3234, or email Beth Corbin at corbin@au.org, Steven Baines at baines@au.org, or David Morris at morris@au.org.

Sincerely,

Americans United for Separation of Church and State – Field Department

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