

# HERE'S HOW CHURCHES CAN ENGAGE IN GOVERNMENT

*Churches can play a major role in addressing the cultural and moral issues of our day.*

*Many churches and pastors have questions about how they can be involved in public policy, ballot initiatives, and elections. The stakes are too high to remain silent, and Christians must engage on these issues.*

NEBRASKA  
FAMILY ALLIANCE

**A pastor has complete freedom to preach what the Bible says about social and moral issues from the pulpit without restriction.**

Although the IRS tax code and campaign laws impose certain limitations on election activity, churches and pastors have many legal avenues for speaking on moral and social issues, including those being debated in our political process.

**Churches may engage in limited activity to “influence legislation” without jeopardizing their non-profit tax status. This includes activities intended to influence specific ballot measures or proposed legislation**, such as urging church members to contact their representatives, supporting or opposing a ballot initiative, and circulating petitions.

A safe gauge is to limit legislative activity to less than 5% of the church’s overall activity. However, a pastor has the complete freedom to preach about Biblical perspectives on current social and moral issues without restriction.



## What Churches CAN DO

- **Speak about social, moral, and “political” issues from the pulpit**
- **Support or oppose ballot initiatives and legislation**
- **Circulate petitions and collect signatures**
- **Encourage church members to vote**
- **Distribute nonpartisan voter guides**



## What Churches CAN'T DO

- **Support or oppose political candidates**
- **Make financial contributions to political candidates and their campaigns or political action committees (PACs)**
- **Distribute partisan voter guides**
- **Use a substantial amount of overall church activity to influence legislation**

*\*As private citizens, individual pastors can endorse candidates for political office and seek to influence legislation to the same extent as any citizen as long as it does not use or involve church resources.*