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## IINYS Notes for Change

**A Word from the President.** Things are changing so rapidly that any day can be the anniversary of something awful – or something good. Interfaith Impact seeks the common good through progressive change. These occasional “Notes for Change” keep you abreast of the latest developments on issues in the Empire State and beyond. We welcome your input in the form of blogs, letters, talks or sermons.

- Dick Gilbert.

**A Change in Timetables:** At our recent summer retreat Executive Director Robb Smith told us that increasingly issues vital to us are being folded into the state budget instead of being presented as stand-alone bills. Therefore, the fall, instead of being a time for organizational updating, has become a time small groups and congregations do more direct advocacy with legislators and staff in preparation for the next session of the Legislature. The Agency budgets have largely been completed. The Executive, Assembly and Senate budgets are being written right now and input from committee chairs is especially important.

You are most effective when working in groups, including other advocacy organization that focus on one area, such as the Coalition for Alternatives to Isolation Confinement, which seeks to mitigate the excessive use of isolation torture (“solitary”) in NY prisons, or the Campaign for NY Health ( <http://www.nyhcampaign.org/>)

Among these budget issues are the Climate and Community Protection Act, limited drivers licenses for undocumented immigrants, various criminal justice reform measures, just taxation, and governance reforms. Look for more information in our action alerts and on our website, [www.interfaithimpactnys.org](http://www.interfaithimpactnys.org).

Fall is also a good time to advocate for non-budget issues. Sound out your legislators on a Constitutional Amendment that guarantees the right to clean air and water and a healthful environment, or advocate for a universal health program. Now is a great time to advocate! This calendar change is part of our effort to work toward a **moral budget**.

- Familiarize yourself with one or two issues.
- Get some people together and meet with your Assembly Member and Senator (or their staff) about those concerns

- Friend your legislators on Facebook and respond when they put something out.
- Get on their email newsletter list and let them know if you like or dislike something.
- Call them
- Join with other organizations in planning and demonstrating for more just and moral world.

Takeaway: to advocate effectively, hit the autumnal ground running.

**Issue 1: Campaign for New York Health** (<http://www.nyhcampaign.org/> ). The recent failure to “repeal and replace” Obamacare has had a paradoxical impact: it has given new life to single-payer universal health care. Given the make-up of the current Congress, there seems little hope of federal legislation, but it does encourage states, those “laboratories of democracy,” to reform their health care programs and to model single-payer, universal care. IINYS encourages you to support this effort. On September 23 the Campaign urges participating in a Day of Outreach. Go to the above website for details. E-mail [nystateofhealth.ny.org.gov](mailto:nystateofhealth.ny.org.gov) for more information on present programs. The Assembly has passed a single-payer bill; the Senate is one vote short - A.4738.Gottfried/S.4840.Rivera. For a podcast debate between Assembly member Richard Gottfried and Bill Hammond of the Empire Center, go to <http://cityandstateny.com/articles/opinion/the-slant-podcast/single-payer-health-care-in-new-york-could-it-work.html>.

**Issue 2: DACA** (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals): While IINYS focuses chiefly on state issues, federal policy often impacts state policy. We condemn President Trump for this morally reprehensible punishment of those 800,000 (42,000 New Yorkers) who live here after being brought to the U.S. by undocumented parents. If moral outrage is not enough, consider the economic consequences: ending DACA will cost Social Security at least \$2.4 trillion over the next 75 years. See [info@socialsecurityworks.org](mailto:info@socialsecurityworks.org). We applaud the Governor and Attorney General for their lawsuit challenging the president’s policy. We urge support of the DREAM Act.

**Issue 3: Green Light NY. Driving Together.** Currently undocumented migrant workers can’t get a driver’s license, so vitally important for them to earn a living and support their families. We urge support of Assembly Bill 4050 and companion legislation in the Senate which would establish Real ID Compliant , two-tier driver’s license systems for New York. This is a limited-purpose driver’s license accessible to all state residents, regardless of immigration status. Contact New York Immigration Coalition at (212) 627-2227 X230 or [cgossett@nyic.org](mailto:cgossett@nyic.org). Follow on Facebook & Twitter #GreenLightNY or #LuzVerdeNY.

**Issue 4: Environment:** 2017 – The Year the Earth Spoke Back. Hurricane season reminds Americans of what scientists have been saying for years: global climate change means a warmer planet, more moisture in the atmosphere, and greater likelihood of extreme

weather. The Earth seems to be telling us that we earthlings are not being good stewards. Our profligate living is a primary cause of global warming and the dangers of extraordinary weather events. In New York State, we have curbed hydrofracking and set green energy goals.

However, the current target of 50% green energy by 2030 is just a starting point. Interfaith Impact supports the Climate and Community Protection Act, which accelerates the process of moving to green energy while addressing environmental justice. Go to Environmental Advocates of New York <http://www.eany.org/> or NY Renews <https://www.nyrenews.org/what-we-do> for updated information:. And go to our website [www.interfaithimpactnys.org](http://www.interfaithimpactnys.org) for a background paper with a theological/ethical rationale for climate stewardship.

**Issue 5: Mobilizing the Congregations.** Interfaith Impact is only as strong as our members in their own communities. The Board meets monthly via teleconferencing, sends out position papers and action alerts, maintains a website and sponsors an annual Advocacy Day. However, we rely on your action at the congregational level.

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**We invite you to:**

- \_\_\_ become a member of IINYS and support it financially (<http://www.interfaithimpactnys.org/Donations.html>)-either our 501C4 action arm, **IINYS, Inc** or our tax deductible 501C3, **IINYS Foundation, Inc**
- \_\_\_ respond to our action alerts by contacting your elected officials and letting us know where they stand or if they want more information.
- \_\_\_ become an ambassador for IINYS in your congregation, receiving and distributing IINYS materials & encouraging congregational participation
- \_\_\_ urge your minister/rabbi to address issues from the pulpit and in adult education

**DONATE NOW**

Interfaith Impact of NYS depends on the donation of friends and members to maintain a year-round presence in Albany. Please, consider a generous donation now. Go to <http://www.interfaithimpactnys.org/Donations.html> or include your check with the form below.



Yes, I'll help make our shared progressive religious values heard in the New York State Legislature and Executive Chamber. I want to donate to (please check one):

Interfaith Impact of NYS, Inc. to support direct issue advocacy (501C4, not tax deductible)

Interfaith Impact of NYS Foundation, Inc. issue education and civic participation (501C3 tax deductible)

Name and title: \_\_\_\_\_

Address - Street: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

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Suggested donation: \_\_\_ \$25, \_\_\_ \$50, \_\_\_ \$100, \_\_\_ \$200, \_\_\_ \$500, \_\_\_ other \_\_\_\_\_

Amount enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (check made out to Interfaith Impact of NYS or IINYS Foundation).

**Please mail to our treasurer at Interfaith Impact of NYS, 101 Coniston Dr., Rochester, NY 14610**

**Interfaith Impact of NYS. P.O. Box 7163 Capitol Building, Albany, NY 12224**

**518-463-5652; [www.interfaithimpactnys.org](http://www.interfaithimpactnys.org); [www.iinys.nationbuilder.com](http://www.iinys.nationbuilder.com)**

Facebook: like our Interfaith Impact of NYS group (to pose your concern) and page for official posts

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ ADDRESS (Street) \_\_\_\_\_

(City) \_\_\_\_\_ (Zip) \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

**Issues check list: what are your priorities for 2018?** 1-5, 1 being highest and 5 lowest and send to [Rsgilbert@uuma.org](mailto:Rsgilbert@uuma.org) or Richard S. Gilbert, 70 Harper Street, Rochester, NY 14607

Women's Equality Agenda \_\_\_ Gas storage and transport \_\_\_ GENDA (transgender rights) \_\_\_ Minimum Wage \_\_\_ Criminal Justice Reform \_\_\_ Moral Budget \_\_\_ Public School Funding \_\_\_ Charter schools \_\_\_ Campaign Finance Reform \_\_\_ Redistricting \_\_\_ Environmental Issues (Clean Energy) \_\_\_ Single Payer Health Care \_\_\_ Dream Act for immigrant children in school \_\_\_ Farm Labor \_\_\_ Medical Marijuana \_\_\_ Separation of Church & State \_\_\_ Death with Dignity \_\_\_ Other (please specify)