



THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST JUSTICE MINISTRY OF NORTH CAROLINA

Call to Action - Write a personal letter to your State Representative & Senator in support of Reproductive Justice and Abortion Access in North Carolina

*** All letters will be hand delivered to your elected officials in Raleigh by fellow UU volunteers.

Step 1 - Find their Contact Info Here

*** At the top of the letter, please include their Name, District and Office Number at the General Assembly.

For example: To:

Representative Marcia Morey
NC House District 30
16 West Jones Street, Rm. 1220
Raleigh, NC 27601-1096

Step 2 - Draft Personal Letters to your State Representative and Senator. You are welcome to use the basic outline and sample language provided below. You can also reference the UU theological grounding and [additional information here](#).

Recommended Basic Structure & Sample Talking Points

Introduce Yourself

- Dear Senator _____ / Representative _____
- My name is _____ I live in _____ and I am one of your constituents.
- Is there anything else that you would like to share about yourself at the top of the letter?

Opening Statement

- I am writing to you today to urge you to protect abortion rights in North Carolina.
- As a Unitarian Universalist, I believe that all of our bodies are sacred, and that we are each endowed with the twin gifts of agency and conscience. Each of us should have the power to decide what does and doesn't happen to our bodies at every moment of our lives because consent and bodily autonomy are holy.

- Abortion bans and restrictions are often passed in the name of people of faith, but I write to you as a part of a movement of people of faith across North Carolina who agree that abortion access is a moral and social good.
- (If you live far away from Raleigh) Because I live so far from Raleigh, I was not able to travel to the General Assembly to speak with you in person but I am grateful to my fellow Unitarian Universalist who was willing to hand deliver this letter on my behalf.

Share your Experiences, Concerns, What's at stake for you and your community.

- As a (parent, healthcare provider, etc.) I am deeply concerned about the impact that abortion restrictions would have on _____
- Has access to an abortion helped you to live into your values in choosing how / if to raise a family?
- Is there a personal story you would like to share?
- When people make decisions that are best for their lives, families thrive and we build communities where each of us can experience dignity and opportunity.
- We know that abortion restrictions and bans disproportionately impact communities of color. Approximately 40% of people who get abortions in the U.S. are Black
- Did you come of age at a time when Abortion Access was illegal? What was that like for you?

Closing

- Thank you for taking the time to hear my concerns / story
- Is your elected official a person of faith? Can you use that in the closing of your letter?
- Strong Closing Statement: The people of North Carolina want abortion access and we are counting on you.
- Can you please share how you plan to vote if a bill to further restrict abortion access comes to a vote in the General Assembly? You can respond to my letter via my contact information below.
- End by including your full name, full address to prove you are their constituent, and the contact information (email and/or phone) so that they can respond to your letter.

*** Note, in your letters **please do not frame reproductive justice as a “Women's Issue.”** As we deepen our understanding of collective liberation, UUs are called to use language and frameworks that truly include everyone impacted by attacks on bodily autonomy including Transgender men, nonbinary people, intersex people, Two-Spirit people, and others who do not identify as women but need access to reproductive healthcare are left out and left behind when we focus solely on a “woman’s right to abortion.”

Step 3 - When You're Done Writing Your Letters

- Save two separate letters (Your Rep and Senator) to a word document.
- Email Rev. Lisa at lisa@uujusticenc.org with the two emails attached. Be sure to include your name and town/city. UU Justice NC will print out your letters and a fellow UU will hand deliver the letter to your elected officials on your behalf.

- There is no deadline for these letters - Just keep them coming!!! But, the next drop-off of letters will likely occur on Tuesday March 7th - so the sooner the better.
- Please share this document with fellow UUs and invite them to get involved.

UU Theological Grounding and Reproductive Justice Information

Unitarian Universalist Reproductive Justice Theological Grounding - Our faith affirms that all of our bodies are sacred, and that we are each endowed with the twin gifts of agency and conscience. Each of us should have the power to decide what does and doesn't happen to our bodies at every moment of our lives because consent and bodily autonomy are holy. And when disparities in resources or freedoms make it more difficult for certain groups of people to exercise autonomy over their own bodies, our faith compels us to take liberatory action. [Click Here](#) to Read to UUA Side With Love's full Reproductive Justice Toolkit.

History of the Reproductive Justice Movement *** This and much more can be found in the incredible Reproductive Justice Guide

SisterSong, one of the foremost Reproductive Justice organizations in the country, defines Reproductive Justice as “the human right to maintain personal bodily autonomy, have children, not have children, and parent the children we have in safe and sustainable communities,” and describes the history of the term:

Indigenous women, women of color, and trans* people have always fought for Reproductive Justice, but the term was invented in 1994. Right before attending the International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo, where the entire world agreed that the individual right to plan your own family must be central to global development, a group of black women gathered in Chicago in June of 1994. They recognized that the women's rights movement, led by and representing middle class and wealthy white women, could not defend the needs of women of color and other marginalized women and trans* people. We needed to lead our own national movement to uplift the needs of the most marginalized women, families, and communities. These women named themselves Women of African Descent for Reproductive Justice, and RJ was born. Rooted in the internationally-accepted human rights framework created by the United Nations, Reproductive Justice combines reproductive rights and social justice.

—SisterSong, “What is Reproductive Justice”

Reproductive Justice is not the same as “reproductive rights” or reproductive health.”

- Whereas a “reproductive health” model focuses on the provision of services and a “reproductive rights” model focuses on laws and legality regarding an individual's right to care. This language and these approaches are limited in that They do not engage the broader social, economic, political, or cultural factors that impact an individual's or community's access to care.

- Reproductive Justice focuses on access and equity for all. It is intersectional in its roots and approach, seeking to identify and address multiple intersecting oppressions that impact access to care.

As part of a liberatory Reproductive Justice movement, we strive to build a world in which all people are able to make choices about their bodies, their health, and their families within safe, thriving communities. In practice, this commitment looks like working to ensure that:

- ★ people of all identities and experiences have access to affirming, affordable health care, including reproductive care and abortion;
- ★ people of every age can access comprehensive, sex-positive, fact-based sex ed;
- ★ people are empowered and supported to choose when, how, and if they will have children;
- ★ our institutions and communities actively work to eradicate sexual violence, abuse, and coercion, and to heal the wounds of such harm;
- ★ that people are supported to make informed, values-aligned decisions about their sexual and reproductive health throughout their lives.

The Problem with “Women’s Rights” Language As we deepen our understanding and engagement of collective liberation, we need to be committed to language and frameworks that truly include everyone impacted by attacks on bodily autonomy. Earlier white feminist frameworks have described abortion and reproductive rights as a “women’s issue” or about “women’s rights.” While, yes, women are significantly impacted by the criminalization of abortion, they are not the only ones who face dangerous and deadly consequences. Our commitment to Reproductive Justice necessitates the inclusion of everyone impacted by these attacks, not just in language but in decision-making and organizing. Transgender men, nonbinary people, intersex people, Two-Spirit people, and others who do not identify as women but need access to reproductive healthcare are left out and left behind when we focus solely on a “woman’s right to abortion.” These communities already encounter significant stigma and barriers in their medical care, and to deny their presence and power in this movement compounds those harms, and limits our collective liberation.