

FUUSB Policy on Requests for Public Statements

From time to time, the Senior Minister, Board of Trustees, or other leaders of the Society receive requests to sign on to public statements, take public positions concerning current events, or participate actively in matters requiring an immediate response on behalf of or in the name of the Society. These requests are often time-sensitive so that bringing them to the congregation as a whole to decide on the Society's position is impractical. This policy lays out a philosophy for and process by which the Senior Minister and Board will address those matters.

What This Policy Does Not Cover

This policy is not intended to affect the right of any member of the staff or congregation to speak or take a position *as an individual* on any issue. It is intended for situations when the request is for someone to act *on behalf of the Society as a whole*.

Policy

1. All requests should be made by a Member of the congregation or the Senior Minister. Generally, a request from an outside organization directly will not be considered unless a Member or the Senior Minister supports the request.
2. Requests should be made to the Senior Minister or the President of the Board of Trustees who will bring it to the full Board for consideration.
3. The Board shall not support a request under this policy if doing so would endanger the Society's non-profit corporate status or violate the Society's bylaws. For example, currently a non-profit may not endorse a political candidate.
4. A request for a financial contribution will not be considered unless it can be incorporated into an already-budgeted line item.
5. Endorsements may only be made without congregational input if they are clearly consistent with the FUUSB mission, commitments, and values and informed by recent or past stances adopted by the UUA (for example, Statement of Conscience, which are available on the UUA website).

Procedure for Board Decision on Requests

1. The Senior Minister is authorized to deny a request that does not meet this policy—for example, request for an endorsement of a political candidate—without Board involvement.
2. Otherwise, a request will be brought by the President to the full Board, and the Board will be asked to respond to the request within a set period, either at a Board meeting or by email copied to all Board members (including the Senior Minister) pursuant to Article IX(B)(8) of the Society's Bylaws, which allows the Board to act by email or other electronic means.

3. To the extent the information is available, a request should include:
 - a. The specific language of the proposal the Board is asked to endorse;
 - b. The names of any other organizations or individuals who are supporting or have been asked to endorse the proposal;
 - c. An explanation of the purpose and intended use of the statement or endorsement;
 - d. An explanation of how the proposal is consistent with UU values, theology, and practices;
 - e. If the proposal has received any opposition from or been rejected by any other organization from which support was sought, the reasons for that opposition or rejection.
4. A Board member may request that a discussion be held or that further information be provided before the Board's vote is taken.
5. Following the Board's decision, the Board President or the Senior Minister will respond to the requester in a timely manner.