

Executive Director:

Christopher Wells
3500 Vicksburg Ln N, Suite 140
Minneapolis, MN 55447
(202) 580-9780
Email: cwells@church-alliance.org

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SERVING COMMUNITIES

Counsel:

K&L Gates LLP
1601 K Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20006
Tel (202) 778-9000
Fax (202) 778-9100

February 15, 2025

The Honorable Mike Johnson
Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives
H-232, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jason Smith
Chairman
U.S. House Committee on Ways and Means
1139 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Richard Neal
Ranking Member
U.S. House Committee on Ways and Means
1129 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Johnson, Chairman Smith, and Ranking Member Neal:

On behalf of the Church Alliance, I am writing in support of the Clergy Act (H.R. 227), which was reintroduced by Congressmen Vince Fong and Mike Thompson on January 7, 2025. The Church Alliance respectfully requests Congress pass this legislation to allow members of the clergy to opt into Social Security during a window extending to April 2030, for those who have been exempted but desire inclusion.

Social Security plays an important role in complementing the retirement benefits denominational church plans provide to religious leaders who have devoted their lives to serving their communities. The Clergy Act provides a one-time opt-in opportunity for clergy not covered by Social Security, creating an avenue to a complete retirement package. We also welcome the provision in the bill that would require the Commissioner of the Internal Revenue Service, in consultation with the Commissioner of Social Security, to create a plan to inform clergy who previously opted to be exempted from Social Security of this opportunity to opt back into Social Security.

The Church Alliance is composed of 34 denominational benefit organizations covering mainline and evangelical Protestant denominations, three Jewish entities, and Catholic schools and institutions. These organizations provide employee benefit plans, including retirement and/or health coverage, to nearly one million participants (clergy, lay workers, and their families). The Church Alliance's members serve approximately 155,000 churches, parishes, synagogues, and faith-based organizations.

We thank Congressmen Fong and Thompson for their leadership on the Clergy Act. We urge the House Ways and Means Committee to favorably report this legislation and the House to advance the legislation on the floor as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Christopher Wells".

Christopher Wells
Executive Director

cc: Congressmen Vince Fong and Mike Thompson