

NONPROFIT ALERT

PRESIDENT TRUMP SIGNS EXECUTIVE ORDER ALLOWING CHURCHES TO ENGAGE IN MORE POLITICAL ACTIVITY

BY ISRAEL TANNENBAUM

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President Trump on Thursday signed an executive order to direct the Internal Revenue Service to relax enforcement of rules barring tax-exempt churches from participating in politics as part of a much-anticipated executive stance on religious liberties.

Specifically, the order states “that the Department of the Treasury does not take any adverse action against any individual, house of worship, or other religious organization on the basis that such individual or organization speaks or has spoken about moral or political issues from a religious perspective.”

The executive order is a move toward repealing the “Johnson Amendment,” named for Lyndon B. Johnson who introduced it in the Senate in 1954, nine years before he became president, which bans churches and other tax-exempt organizations from supporting political candidates. The provision is in the tax laws and would require an act of Congress to fully repeal.

It also remains unclear to what extent this would be applicable to other tax-exempt organizations; though the Johnson Amendment applies to all exempt organizations, the executive order is specifically geared toward religious organizations.

The repeal of the Johnson Amendment is also being written into tax legislation being developed in the House of Representatives, according to congressional aides.

We will continue to monitor and provide insight on this legislation as it develops.

Please feel free to reach out to our professionals with any questions or concerns.

Full text of executive order can be viewed [here](#).

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

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