



U A H C

U N I O N O F A M E R I C A N
H E B R E W C O N G R E G A T I O N S
איחוד ליהדות מתקדמת באמריקה

Proposed Resolutions
for the
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47 country in the world, one in six children lives in poverty and 33 million people are hungry or at
48 risk of hunger. Requests for emergency food assistance and shelter increased an average of 19%
49 during 2002, and 38% of the requests by homeless families went unmet in cities across the
50 United States. In 2001, 32.9 million people in the United States lived below the federal poverty
51 line, while the estimated cost of maintaining a safe and decent standard of living, including food,
52 housing, health care, transportation, child care, and taxes, was almost twice the federal poverty
53 threshold. Almost 30% of working families with one to three children under age twelve did not
54 earn enough to afford these basic necessities. A record 41.2 million people in the United States
55 did not have health insurance in 2001, and health care premiums are increasing dramatically—at
56 about 11% a year, five times the current rate of inflation. As economic stagnation continues,
57 along with the consequent likelihood of greater unemployment, the number of people at risk is
58 likely to grow.

59
60 Unfortunately, many proposals from the Administration and Congress would make matters
61 worse and further erode our national commitment to promoting and protecting the well-being of
62 our most vulnerable citizens. Policy proposals and legislation already enacted this year will
63 drastically shrink federal revenues while shifting responsibility for national antipoverty programs
64 to cash-strapped states. Others would make participating in essential antipoverty programs more
65 difficult for low-income families or shift the burden for program implementation to faith-based
66 charities. Such measures are an abdication by the federal government of its responsibility for
67 meeting the needs of poor Americans.

68
69 The tax-cut plan passed by Congress in May 2003, along with additional tax-cut proposals
70 currently being discussed, will drastically reduce federal revenues and do little to help poor
71 Americans. The single proposal that might have helped poor Americans, a refundable tax credit
72 for the 12 million children who live in families with income from \$10,500 to \$26,625, was
73 deleted during last-minute negotiations. The stated cost of the legislation is \$350 billion over ten
74 years, but this cost is based on a number of artificial “sunsets,” which would phase out tax cuts
75 over the next few years. Some members of Congress have already pledged to extend these
76 sunset provisions. If all tax cuts set to expire were to be extended until 2013, the cost of the tax
77 plan would be \$1.1 trillion, plunging our government into ever-larger deficits that will likely
78 inhibit federal investment in both existing and new programs intended to help people move out
79 of poverty.

80
81 Legislative proposals designed to reduce “fraud and error” and increase state flexibility may well
82 also have a devastating impact on the poor. The Administration has proposed requiring
83 increased documentation to prevent ineligible students from receiving free and reduced-price
84 school lunches and to prevent low-income families from claiming the Earned Income Tax Credit
85 (EITC) in error. Yet research has demonstrated that requiring complex and hard-to-locate
86 documentation from families with erratic work histories and limited English skills drives away
87 more eligible than ineligible people. The School Lunch Program was created in 1946 as a
88 "measure of national security, to safeguard the health and well-being of the nation's children,"
89 and it fed 27.2 million children during the 2001–2002 school year. The EITC, our nation’s most
90 successful antipoverty program, lifted 3.9 million people out of poverty in 2001.

91

92 Other pending proposals focus on funding entitlement programs by means of capped block
93 grants and shifting responsibility for the administration of federal programs to the states. The
94 Administration has also proposed a radical change in Medicaid and the State Children’s Health
95 Insurance Program (SCHIP), converting them from programs that guarantee basic health care to
96 all eligible individuals to programs with limited federal funding and no guarantee of service. In
97 2001, Medicaid provided health and long-term care coverage to nearly 44 million low-income
98 Americans, and SCHIP provided coverage to 3.5 million children in families that did not qualify
99 for Medicaid but still could not afford health insurance. A similar approach for devolving
100 responsibility from the federal government to the states is being used with regard to Head Start,
101 which has improved the lives of more than 20 million vulnerable preschoolers, and the Section 8
102 Housing Voucher program, which helps 1.6 million low-income families pay rent each month.
103 None of those proposed changes provides meaningful protections for the people these programs
104 are designed to serve.

105
106 The notion that the states can take up the slack is illusory. States are currently facing a \$70
107 billion budget shortfall, their worst fiscal crisis since World War II. Many states have already cut
108 programs, including child care assistance and Medicaid, that help poor Americans. The tax cut
109 passed in May 2003 will further erode state revenue and could cost states \$3 billion over the next
110 two state fiscal years. The ten-year cost to states could be \$16 billion or more if the new
111 provisions do not “sunset” and if states do not “decouple” their tax codes from the new federal
112 laws. When the federal government passes tax cuts that reduce revenues and then shirks its
113 responsibilities to the poor by devolving programs to cash-strapped states, it is effectively
114 denying the poor the benefit of those programs.

115
116 Nor is privatization of social services through the President’s Faith-Based Initiative or related
117 proposals an answer. Our Reform Jewish community has always been in the forefront of efforts
118 to alleviate the anguish of poverty. Much of the social action programming done by our
119 congregations—Habitat for Humanity builds, soup kitchens, Mitzvah Days, partnerships with
120 shelters and local social service agencies—stems from an ongoing commitment to alleviating the
121 challenges of poverty. But we must do more. We must help our congregations to educate
122 members about the causes and consequences of poverty, generate programs to address the needs
123 of local communities, and participate in advocacy at all levels of government to support
124 programs designed to help the poor and lift those in need out of poverty. Examples from across
125 the country include congregations that have fundamentally affected their own neighborhoods by
126 “adopting” entire communities, developing work opportunities and job-training programs for
127 adults, providing educational support to local schools, and starting community development
128 funds. However, none of that can replace a sustained federal effort to eradicate poverty.
129 Congregations and other faith-based or community groups can and do supplement the safety net
130 and efforts to help the poor become self-sufficient, but they do not have the resources to replace
131 the federal government as the primary agent for fulfilling our society’s obligations to the poor.

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133 **THEREFORE**, the Union of American Hebrew Congregations resolves to:
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- 135 1. Reaffirm our commitment to helping North America’s poor and work toward the
136 eradication of poverty in North America;
- 137 2. Reaffirm our opposition to tax cuts and spending priorities that do not allow our national,
138 state, and local governments to address adequately important national priorities, including
139 the eradication of poverty, or to maintain existing social programs that benefit the poor;
- 140 3. Oppose changes to the Earned Income Tax Credit, Child Nutrition programs, Medicaid,
141 the State Children’s Health Insurance Program, Head Start, and the Section 8 Housing
142 Voucher program that would harm eligible families or shift federal responsibility for
143 these programs to the states;
- 144 4. Support a reauthorization of the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families program and
145 the Workforce Investment Act, designed to give families the skills they need to move out
146 of poverty and into self-sufficiency;
- 147 5. Call on congregations to assess how best to meet the economic needs of their local
148 communities and their congregants who may in be need and to engage in advocacy and
149 action at the local, state, and national levels, designed to address the causes of poverty
150 and spur change;
- 151 6. Encourage congregations to create and fund or seek funding for projects that promote
152 economic self-sufficiency; and
- 153 7. Call on the Commission on Social Action to prepare and disseminate resources to assist
154 congregations in implementing this resolution, including creating a network for sharing
155 ideas, information, and best practices in congregations across North America.

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PROPOSED RESOLUTION ON STEM CELL RESEARCH

Submitted by the Commission on Social Action
and the Department of Jewish Family Concerns
to the 67th UAHC General Assembly

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BACKGROUND

Jewish tradition teaches us that preserving life and promoting health are among the most precious of values. These values have informed our affirmative commitment to medical science throughout the ages. Judaism has always encouraged scientific and medical advances. As Nachmanides taught, the practice of healing is not merely a profession, it is a **מצוה**, mitzvah, a righteous obligation. A recent CCAR responsum applies this principle to human stem cell research: “If we define the administration of lifesaving medical therapy as **פיקוח נפש**, *pikuach nefesh*, we should not forget that physicians could not save lives were it not for the extensive scientific research upon which our contemporary practice of medicine is based. Since research into human stem cells partakes of the **מצוה**, mitzvah, of healing, surely our society ought to support it” (CCAR Responsum 5761.7, *Human Stem Cell Research*, Rabbi Mark Washofsky).

Continuing developments in biological science have opened the door to life-enhancing and life-saving technologies. The sequencing and mapping of the human genome, in particular, have profound implications for medical technologies. At the forefront of these possibilities is the opportunity for treating or preventing diseases through gene manipulation, often called “gene therapy.” Somatic gene therapy attempts to correct a genetic defect in the cells or tissues of an individual in order to prevent or treat disease and may help heal or prevent debilitating afflictions. Somatic gene therapy should not be confused with germline therapy, which is more controversial and involves changes to an individual’s genetic makeup that can then be passed on to future generations, with unknown implications and potential complications.

Stem cell research involves cells that can potentially develop into any kind of cell, tissue, or organ in the body (“totipotent stem cells”) and that may one day soon be able to replace damaged or sick cells in a patient with an injury or degenerative disease. For example, scientific research into stem cell regeneration holds the promise of finding new and effective treatments for Alzheimer’s, Parkinson’s, spinal cord injuries, and certain types of cancers. The moral imperative to pursue stem cell research is clear; it is an embodiment of the **מצוה**, mitzvah, of healing. Our tradition requires that we use all available knowledge to heal the ill, and “when one delays in doing so, it is as if he has shed blood” (*Shulchan Aruch, Yorei De`ah 336:1*).

Totipotent stem cells are commonly obtained by using somatic cell nuclear transfer (SCNT) technology. This technique, commonly referred to as cloning, involves the removal of the nucleus of an unfertilized, mature egg and its replacement with a genetically complete nucleus obtained from another adult or fetal organism. Since almost all of the hereditary genetic material

45 of a cell is contained within its nucleus, the entity into which this egg develops is genetically
46 identical to the organism that was the source of the transferred nucleus.

47
48 While some argue that stem cells harvested from adults and the existing stem cell lines are
49 sufficient for research, most in the scientific community maintain that the use of SCNT
50 technology to develop new stem cell lines (“embryonic stem cells”) is critical to further
51 development of the medical research. It is important to note that there are ample sources of
52 embryos for research that are currently being discarded and that research using embryonic tissue
53 would not require the creation of new embryos for the purpose of such research.

54
55 “Therapeutic cloning” uses SCNT technology to create cells that develop only until the pre-
56 embryo stage, at which point the stem cells are removed. These stem cells are then used to
57 research possible cures for serious medical diseases and conditions. In contrast, “reproductive
58 cloning” attempts to use this technology to produce a living, breathing human being. This
59 resolution deals with therapeutic cloning; it does not address the issue of reproductive cloning
60 of humans.

61
62 SCNT technology can play a vital role in exploring the causes and treatment of genetic diseases;
63 it may help to develop therapies for the afflictions mentioned above, and it may also help
64 develop stem cells to regenerate human tissues, nerve cells, and skin cells.

65
66 Some opponents of SCNT technology argue that every fertilized egg could be allowed to develop
67 into a fetus. Halting the process to harvest the stem cells seems to them like killing a fetus—a
68 perspective the UAHC has never accepted. Numerous UAHC, CCAR and WRJ resolutions and
69 CCAR Responsa about when life begins clarify our views in this area. (See, for example, the
70 1985 and 2000 CCAR Responsa related to abortion, found on-line at www.ccarnet.org.)

71
72 To other opponents, the possibility for abuse of SCNT technology seems overwhelming, and for
73 this reason, they would prohibit the entire field of research and therapy. While we recognize the
74 potential abuses that could arise from SCNT technology, these concerns can be met by taking
75 measured, cautious steps and are far outweighed by the potential benefit of medical procedures
76 that promise to cure so many.

77
78 Clearly, there is a need for moral and ethical deliberation, yet we know that millions of God’s
79 children are plagued by diseases and injuries that we have the potential to heal. The ethical
80 choice must be to advance our research into lifesaving technologies, not abandon it.

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82 **THEREFORE**, the Union of American Hebrew Congregations resolves to:

- 83
84 1. Support:
- 85 a. Research using both adult and embryonic stem cells, in addition to the existing lines
 - 86 currently approved for funding by the United States and Canadian governments;
 - 87 b. Research using somatic gene therapy;
 - 88 c. Research using somatic cell nuclear transfer (SCNT) technology for therapeutic
 - 89 cloning; and
 - 90 d. Government funding for all such research;

- 91 2. Oppose efforts to restrict or penalize scientists, clinicians, or patients for participating in
92 stem cell research and SCNT technology for therapeutic purposes;
93 3. Support appropriate legislative and executive actions consistent with the above
94 objectives;
95 4. Support efforts by the scientific community to develop regulations and monitor those
96 using SCNT technology; and
97 5. Call upon congregations, in conjunction with the UAHC Department of Jewish Family
98 Concerns and the Commission on Social Action, to create educational programs that
99 explore the issues raised by genetic technology within a framework of Jewish values.

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PROPOSED RESOLUTION ON INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

Submitted by the Commission on Social Action
to the 67th UAHC General Assembly

BACKGROUND

10 Having been the quintessential victims of religious persecution over the centuries, Jews know
11 what happens when otherwise good people stand silently by in the face of discrimination and
12 oppression of others. Jewish tradition teaches that in every generation, we are obligated to view
13 ourselves as if each of us was personally brought forth out of Egypt. This instruction, along with
14 the commandment “You shall not oppress a stranger, for you know the heart of a stranger, as you
15 were strangers in the land of Egypt” (Exodus 23:9), serves as a call for the Jewish people to rise
16 up against slavery and tyranny in our own time. The Reform Jewish Movement is therefore
17 committed to protecting religious freedom for all the world’s inhabitants by raising awareness
18 about and speaking out against religious persecution wherever it exists.

19
20 The Reform Movement has been an outspoken and steadfast advocate for people around the
21 globe who suffer torture, slavery, starvation, and death because of their religious identity.
22 Consistent with past resolutions on human rights in general and religious persecution in specific
23 countries—including *Oppression of Racial and Religious Minorities* (1935), *Opposition to*
24 *Communism, Fascism, and Nazism* (1939), *Commitment to Africa* (1999), and *Religious*
25 *Persecution in China* (2001)—we have worked in coalition with other religious and human
26 rights groups to bring peace to Sudan, freedom of religion to religious minorities in China, and
27 justice to women in Afghanistan. The Jewish community was successful in the Soviet Jewry
28 Campaign because non-Jews rallied to our cause and the U.S. led other governments to weigh in.
29 We can do no less for those persecuted today, and with the support and commitment of the
30 United States, Canada, and other governments, we can be successful.

31
32 In the Holiness Code in Leviticus, we are commanded, “You may not stand idly by when your
33 neighbor’s blood is being shed” (Leviticus 19:16). We are committed to fulfilling our obligation
34 as Jews to speak out on behalf of all who are persecuted.

35
36 In 1998, the United States Congress passed and President Bill Clinton signed the International
37 Religious Freedom Act, intended to “express United States foreign policy with respect to, and to
38 strengthen United States advocacy on behalf of individuals persecuted in foreign countries on
39 account of religion,” “to authorize United States actions in response to violations of religious
40 freedom in foreign countries,” and to create a U.S. Commission on International Religious
41 Freedom to make recommendations to the President on how to enhance U.S. effectiveness in this
42 work. The Reform Jewish Movement played a central role in the successful efforts to pass this
43 legislation, and the first chair of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom was
44 the director of our Movement’s Religious Action Center, Rabbi David Saperstein.

46 The law calls on the United States government:
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- 48 • “To condemn violations of religious freedom and to promote and to assist other
49 governments in the promotion of the fundamental right of religion”;
- 50 • “To be vigorous and flexible, reflecting both the unwavering commitment of the United
51 States to religious freedom and the desire of the United States for the most effective and
52 principled response in light of the range of violations of religious freedom by a variety of
53 persecuting regimes and the status of the relations of the United States with different
54 nations”;
- 55 • “To work with foreign governments that affirm and protect religious freedom in order to
56 develop multilateral documents and initiatives to combat violations of religious freedom
57 and promote the right to religious freedom abroad”; and
- 58 • “To use and implement appropriate tools in the United States foreign policy apparatus,
59 including diplomatic, political, commercial, charitable, educational, and cultural
60 channels, to promote respect for religious freedom by all governments and peoples.”
61

62 The law calls on the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom to evaluate
63 “United States government policies in response to violations of religious freedom” and “consider
64 and recommend options for policies of the United States government with respect to each foreign
65 country the government of which has engaged in or tolerated violations of religious freedom,
66 including particularly severe violations of religious freedom, including diplomatic inquiries,
67 diplomatic protest, official public protest, demarche of protest, condemnation within multilateral
68 fora, delay or cancellation of cultural or scientific exchanges, delay or cancellation of working,
69 official, or state visits, reduction of certain assistance funds, termination of certain assistance
70 funds, imposition of targeted trade sanctions, imposition of broad trade sanctions, and
71 withdrawal of the chief of mission.”
72

73 The concerns regarding religious liberty expressed in the International Religious Freedom Act
74 echo the ideas articulated in international agreements and declarations such as the Universal
75 Declaration of Human Rights (adopted and proclaimed by the General Assembly of the United
76 Nations in 1948) and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (which entered into
77 force in 1976 and has been ratified by the United States, Canada, and 140 other nations). The
78 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, for example, declares that “everyone shall
79 have the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion” and that “in those states in which
80 ethnic, religious, or linguistic minorities exist, persons belonging to such minorities shall not be
81 denied the right, in community with the other members of their group, to enjoy their own culture,
82 to profess and practice their own religion, or to use their own language.”
83

84 Despite these agreements, religious freedom is under attack all over the world. The U.S.
85 Commission on International Religious Freedom has identified twenty-two countries whose
86 policies and practices have generated concern about systemic violations of religious freedom.
87 Among these, China, Iran, Iraq, Laos, Myanmar, North Korea, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Sudan,
88 Turkmenistan, and Vietnam have been designated by the U.S. Department of State as “countries
89 of particular concern” (CPCs).
90

91 The country reports and policy recommendations submitted by the U.S. Commission on
92 International Religious Freedom are invaluable tools for determining U.S. foreign policy. Full
93 compliance with all of the Commission’s recommendations on the part of the United States
94 Administration is, of course, unlikely because the Administration must consider other diplomatic
95 and political concerns. Still, although there are instances in which the President has agreed with
96 the Commission’s findings and the U.S. Department of State has implemented its
97 recommendations, too often the Administration has failed to respond appropriately to the
98 violations of religious freedom documented by the Commission.
99

100 **THEREFORE**, the Union of American Hebrew Congregations resolves to:
101

- 102 1. Call upon the governments of the world to:
 - 103 a. End all persecution on the basis of religious beliefs or practices;
 - 104 b. Ratify the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and abide by the
105 provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; and
 - 106 c. Hold themselves and other governments to commitments arising from their
107 ratification of international agreements as they apply to religious freedoms;
- 108 2. Call upon the United States and Canadian governments to support religious freedom
109 around the world and take appropriate action when there are violations of religious
110 freedom; and
- 111 3. Call upon the United States government to implement the recommendations of the U.S.
112 Commission on International Religious Freedom, including but not limited to:
 - 113 a. Engaging in high-level dialogue with foreign governments aimed at addressing
114 religious persecution;
 - 115 b. Facilitating reform in countries that restrict religious freedom by providing
116 training for lawyers, lawmakers, and judges;
 - 117 c. Encouraging other governments to ratify agreements to uphold religious freedom
118 and other human rights and holding participating governments to commitments
119 made by their ratification of international agreements;
 - 120 d. Placing sanctions on foreign governments when ongoing systemic persecution
121 persists;
 - 122 e. Enhancing the training of foreign service officers and U.S. Administration and
123 legislative officials about the role of religion in the world’s varied societies and
124 the problems of religious persecution; and
 - 125 f. Supporting and cooperating with organizations and coalitions working for
126 religious freedom and providing humanitarian and legal support to victims of
127 religious persecution.

48 **THEREFORE**, the Union of American Hebrew Congregations resolves to:
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- 50 1. Support federal efforts to:
51 a. Acknowledge the fundamental injustice and inhumanity of slavery in the United
52 States;
53 b. Memorialize the lives of those who suffered and perished as a consequence of
54 slavery in the United States; and
55 c. Promote cultural understanding of African American heritage to further enhance
56 social justice and racial harmony; and
57 2. Seek a greater understanding of these historical realities of American society by working
58 in coalition with other religious, racial, and ethnic groups in supporting the establishment
59 of memorials, museums, and monuments, which promote cultural understanding, social
60 justice, and racial harmony.

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PROPOSED RESOLUTION ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN CUBA

Submitted by Temple Judea of Coral Gables, FL,
to the 67th UAHC General Assembly

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BACKGROUND

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The Reform Movement has a long history of supporting international human rights. In 1939, the UAHC passed a resolution on Human Rights stating, "We maintain that every human being is entitled to live unmolested and to enjoy his inalienable rights in the land in which he was born or in which he has dwelt lawfully. In modern civilization no government has the right to exclude any of its people from life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness by legal discriminations or by racial or religious persecutions." Above all, we seek to uphold Hillel's statement: "If I am not for myself, who will be for me? But if I am only for myself, what am I? And if not now, when?" (*Pirkei Avot* 1:14).

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In March 2003, seventy-five dissidents were arrested and, with minimal due process, given jail sentences of up to twenty-eight years for "mercenary activities and other acts against the independence and territorial integrity of the Cuban state" ("Cuba Confirms Sentencing Dozens of Pro-Democracy Dissidents," *The New York Times* April 10, 2003, Sec. A, p. 9). Among those arrested were leaders of the Varela Project, who had obtained 11,000 signatures on a petition in support of democratic reform. Those imprisoned included librarians, economists, journalists, and other dissidents. Amnesty International has noted that "a review of the limited information contained in the available trial documents indicates that the conduct for which dissidents were prosecuted was not self-evidently criminal; it was nonviolent and seemed to fall within the parameters of the legitimate exercise of fundamental freedoms as guaranteed under international standards." Cuba's classification of these acts as crimes is emblematic of the government's disregard for precious individual freedoms.

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The Cuban government contends that those arrested were conspiring against the state with the aid of the head of the U.S. Interests Section in Havana. State Department spokesman Richard Boucher termed the arrests an "appalling act of intimidation against those who seek freedom and democratic change in Cuba." In response, the U.S. ordered the expulsion of fourteen Cuban diplomats from New York and Washington, DC, and Canada delivered a letter of protest to the Cuban ambassador.

This and other such actions taken by the Cuban government to repress the liberty of the Cuban people constitute ongoing violations of human rights.

THEREFORE, the Union of American Hebrew Congregations resolves to:

1. Declare our opposition to the recent imprisonment of individuals by the Cuban government for exercising basic human rights; and
2. Call upon the governments of the United States and Canada and religious organizations internationally to seek the immediate release of all persons imprisoned by the Cuban government simply for exercising basic human rights.

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**PROPOSED RESOLUTION ON
THE MEDICINAL USE OF MARIJUANA**

Submitted by Congregation Beth Am, Los Altos Hills, CA,
to the 67th UAHC General Assembly

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BACKGROUND

9 According to our tradition, a physician is obligated to heal the sick (Maimonides commentary on
10 Mishnah Nedarim 4:4). The use of marijuana as medicine goes back at least 5,000 years. Under
11 the Controlled Substances Act of 1970, U.S. law currently defines marijuana as a Schedule I
12 drug—a prohibited substance—having no currently accepted medical use in treatment in the
13 United States, a high potential for abuse, and a lack of evidence of safety for use under medical
14 supervision. In contrast, Schedule II drugs have restricted access as highly controlled
15 medications that are prescribed in writing in triplicate using the physician's assigned number.
16 Moreover, Schedule II medications are for use in pain management for a limited period of time
17 in limited quantity.

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19 Anecdotal based reports on the medical use of marijuana have indicated that it provides relief
20 from symptoms, conditions and treatment side effects of several serious illnesses. These include
21 glaucoma, the wasting syndrome associated with HIV/AIDS, nausea associated with cancer
22 chemotherapy, and muscle spasms that often accompany multiple sclerosis and chronic pain.
23 Thus far, scientific studies regarding the efficacy and safety of marijuana use for therapeutic
24 purposes have been inconclusive.

25
26 In recent years the development and implementation of pain management have changed. In the
27 United States, more than 30 states have approved legislation in support of the medicinal use of
28 marijuana. U.S. federal law supersedes state law, however, and prevents the implementation of
29 these states' mandates. Because marijuana is not legally available in the U.S., except for research
30 purposes pursuant to limited Investigational New Drug applications approved by the Food and
31 Drug Administration, many patients cannot avail themselves of this therapy and must resort to
32 the black market to obtain relief and are thus subject to arrest or incarceration. At this time,
33 Health Canada, the Canadian federal department of health, permits the use of marijuana for
34 medical purposes. A court case is pending to determine the method by which patients will obtain
35 the marijuana.

36
37 In January 1997, the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy asked the Institute of
38 Medicine to assess the potential health benefits and risks of marijuana and its cannabinoid
39 compounds (the primary psychoactive ingredients). The Institute of Medicine's report, released
40 in March 1999, recommends continued research into physiological effects of marijuana's
41 constituent cannabinoids and their potential therapeutic value for pain relief, including closely
42 monitored clinical trials of smoked marijuana. The Institute of Medicine's report also
43 recommends short term use (less than 6 months) of marijuana for patients with debilitating
44 symptoms for whom all approved medications have failed and relief of symptoms could be
45 reasonably expected, with treatment administered under medical supervision and the guidance of
46 an institutional review board.

47 **THEREFORE**, the Union of American Hebrew Congregations resolves to:
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- 49 1. Urge elected officials in the United States to support federal legislation and regulation to
50 allow the medicinal use of marijuana for patients with intractable pain and other
51 conditions, under medical supervision;
- 52 2. Urge the Food and Drug Administration to expand the scope of allowable Investigational
53 New Drug applications in order to move research forward more quickly toward an
54 approved product;
- 55 3. Call for further medical research on marijuana and its constituent compounds with the
56 goal of developing reliable and safe cannabinoid drugs for management of debilitating
57 conditions; and
- 58 4. Call upon congregations to advocate for the necessary changes in local, state and federal
59 law to permit the medicinal use of marijuana and ensure its accessibility for that purpose.

1 **PROPOSED RESOLUTION ON THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE AMERICAN**
2 **CONFERENCE OF CANTORS (ACC)**

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4 Submitted by the Joint Commission on Synagogue Music
5 and the Commission on Religious Living
6 to the 67th UAHC General Assembly
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9 *Then you shall make proclamation with the blast of the horn throughout your land, unto all the*
10 *inhabitants thereof. And you shall hallow the fiftieth year; a jubilee shall that fiftieth year be*
11 *unto you. (Leviticus 25:9–10)*
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14 **BACKGROUND**

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16 “For decades, cantors and synagogue musicians have worked in tandem with rabbis to infuse our
17 worship services with joyful and meaningful music. Equally important is the role that each of
18 you—clergy and professionals alike—plays in building and sustaining the vibrant congregations
19 that are vital and precious links in our Union. Through your sacred work, you not only provide
20 caring and compassionate service to members and their families but also ensure that our spiritual
21 homes are exemplary houses of worship, houses of study, and houses of assembly” (Rabbi Eric
22 Yoffie, on the occasion of the ACC/GTM Jubilee Conference in New York, July 2, 2003).
23

24 The American Conference of Cantors was founded in 1953 by a small and dedicated group of
25 "sweet singers in Israel" who were called to serve the Jewish people in Reform congregational
26 settings. Over the last fifty years, the ACC has evolved into a thriving professional organization
27 that currently represents over 450 cantors in Australia, Austria, Canada, England, Hong Kong,
28 Israel, Sweden, and the United States of America as בלי קודש, *k'lei kodesh*, serving the
29 multifarious needs of כלל ישראל, *K'lal Yisrael*.
30

31 The ACC exists to support its members in their sacred calling as emissaries for Judaism and for
32 Jewish music. Each individual cantor offers spiritual, pastoral, musical, educational, and
33 organizational leadership to the congregations and communities of the Reform Movement. The
34 American Conference of Cantors draws upon the energies and aspirations of its members
35 through a shared and dynamic vision of programs and initiatives that respond to the needs of the
36 greater Reform community.
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38 Members of the ACC contribute greatly to the vitality of our Jewish culture and heritage.
39 Rooted in the past yet envisioning new growth toward the future, cantors invested and certified
40 by Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion are thoroughly schooled in Jewish music
41 and its history, as well as the history of our people through its liturgy, its philosophy, and the
42 study of its sacred texts. Members of the ACC strive to maintain the highest standards of
43 excellence and aesthetic authenticity while seeking to provide our communities with a
44 compelling experience of text, music, and learning in relationship to one another and
45 connectedness to God.
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THEREFORE, the Union of American Hebrew Congregations resolves to:

1. Congratulate the American Conference of Cantors (ACC) on the occasion of its 50th (Jubilee) Anniversary;
2. Recognize the integral role that the ACC plays to ensure a vibrant and secure future for Reform Judaism by serving in leadership positions on numerous commissions of the UAHC and most notably the Joint Commission on Synagogue Music and the Commission on Religious Living;
3. Acknowledge and applaud the significant contribution to the Reform community made by members of the ACC through their commitment to maintaining a sacred covenant (ברית קודש, *b'rit kodesh*) with the CCAR, HUC-JIR, and the UAHC and its affiliates and their devotion to acting in partnership to benefit כלל ישראל, *K'lal Yisrael*; and
4. Affirm the sacred calling of the cantor and the centrality of Jewish music, cantillation, and נוסח, *musach*, in transmitting Torah and the rich and variegated heritage and values of the Jewish people to present and future generations through the many voices and faces of the American Conference of Cantors.

**CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS OF THE
UNION OF AMERICAN HEBREW CONGREGATIONS**

**ARTICLE XIII.
MEETINGS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

SECTION 11. All resolutions to be acted upon by the General Assembly shall be presented as follows:

- a. Resolutions may be initiated by presentation to the Resolutions Committee (care of the administrative secretary) by a constituent congregation, a council or federation, the Board of Trustees, a national affiliate, or a commission not less than ninety (90) days prior to the date appointed for the convening of the General Assembly. All such resolutions shall be considered by the Resolutions Committee, which shall have the power to endorse them, recommend rejection of them, or suggest revisions thereof. All resolutions so submitted, in original form or as changed with the consent of the proposers, shall be reported to the constituent congregations of the Union not less than sixty (60) days prior to the date appointed for the convening of the General Assembly, together with the recommendations of the Resolutions Committee, including any suggested changes or substitutes and reasons therefor. Proposed amendments to such reported resolutions may be submitted to the Resolutions Committee at least ten (10) days prior to the date appointed for the convening of the General Assembly.

The Resolutions Committee shall meet in the city in which the General Assembly is being held at least forty-eight hours prior to the opening of the first scheduled plenary session to consider such resolutions and any suggested amendments thereto, at which time proposers of the resolutions or amendments shall have an opportunity to be heard.

- b. Resolutions may be submitted to the Resolutions Committee through the administrative secretary by petition of the majority of the registered delegates of each of at least five constituent congregations not later than the end of the plenary session of the second day of the General Assembly.
- c. Additional resolutions may be presented to the General Assembly at any time during the meeting of the General Assembly by the Resolutions Committee and by other committees of the General Assembly appointed by the chairman of the Board of Trustees or by the presiding officer.

SECTION 12. All resolutions referred or submitted to the Resolutions Committee of the General Assembly as provided in subsections (a) or (b) of Section 11 of this article shall be considered by said committee, and such resolutions as it shall approve, either as originally proposed or as modified, shall be recommended by it to the General Assembly for consideration and passage. The Resolutions Committee shall also report any resolutions rejected by it or on which it failed to act, and these resolutions may not be considered by the General Assembly except upon the affirmative vote of the majority of delegates present and voting without debate.

SECTION 13. The adoption of resolutions recommended to the General Assembly by the Resolutions Committee pursuant to subsection (a) of Section 11 of this article shall require the affirmative vote of a majority of the delegates present and voting. Amendments to such resolutions that were previously submitted to the Resolutions Committee prior to the ten-day period described in subsection (a) of Section 11 of this article, if properly submitted to the General Assembly for consideration, shall require the affirmative vote of a majority of the delegates present and voting. Amendments to such resolutions that were not previously submitted to the Resolutions Committee prior to such ten-day period shall be considered by the General Assembly only upon the affirmative vote of a majority of the delegates present and voting without debate. The adoption of resolutions presented to the General Assembly pursuant to subsections (b) or (c) of Section 11 of this article shall require the affirmative vote of three-fifths of the delegates present and voting.

SECTION 14. Except as otherwise provided herein, meetings of the General Assembly shall be conducted in accordance with parliamentary usage as set forth in the latest revised edition of *Robert's Rules of Order*.

2003 RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE

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