



COUNCIL FOR CHRISTIAN COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES

The Honorable Senator Susan Collins  
United States Senate  
413 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510-1904

The Honorable Senator Tammy Baldwin  
United States Senate  
709 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators,

The CCCU strongly recommends that the Senate include the attached religious freedom amendment within the Respect for Marriage Act (S.4556). The CCCU represents over 140 Christ-centered institutions of higher education in the United States encompassing over 500,000 students. The CCCU’s mission is to advance the cause of Christ-centered higher education and help our institutions transform lives by faithfully relating scholarship and service to biblical truth. CCCU institutions adhere to Biblical values and traditions, including teaching the Biblical understanding of marriage as between one man and one woman as an essential foundation for a thriving society.

Since the *Obergefell v. Hodges* decision, the CCCU and other religious and First Amendment groups have sought to both uphold their sincere convictions regarding marriage and, in the spirit of *Obergefell*, advocate for a balanced legislative approach that preserves religious freedom and addresses LGBTQ civil rights. This carefully crafted amendment includes both strong religious liberty language recognized in the *Obergefell* decision and non-retaliation language that ensures this legislation cannot be used by state and federal agencies to punish religious organizations for their sincerely held beliefs.

This amendment provides explicit Congressional support for the truth that traditional marriage supporters and their beliefs are decent and honorable as was stated by the Supreme Court in *Obergefell*.<sup>1</sup> It also sends a strong bipartisan message to Congress, the Administration, and the public that LGBTQ rights can co-exist with religious freedom protections, and that the rights of both groups can be advanced in a way that is prudent and practical.

Sincerely,

Shirley V. Hoogstra, J.D.  
President

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<sup>1</sup> *Obergefell v. Hodges* 576 U.S. 14-556 (2015)