

CHARITABLE CHOICE

1 Hadassah, the Women's Zionist Organization of America, has long been a staunch
2 supporter of the strict separation of church and state provided for in the First Amendment
3 of the U.S. Constitution. As such, Hadassah is opposed to current efforts to direct
4 government funds to create publicly funded "charitable choice" programs.

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6 These initiatives would provide public funding for social service programs operated by
7 pervasively sectarian organizations (like synagogues, churches and mosques) as well as by
8 religiously affiliated organizations (like Jewish Family Services) but without requiring
9 service providers to implement appropriate safeguards to prevent First Amendment
10 violations. As a result, employees of and people receiving social services from these
11 organizations could be susceptible to proselytizing, indoctrination or other forms of
12 religious-based coercion. Employees of these organizations could also be terminated due to
13 their personal religious beliefs.

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15 Hadassah calls on Congress and all state legislatures to oppose charitable choice
16 programs that threaten the protections provided in the First Amendment of the U.S.
17 Constitution.