

# For Progressives Who Vote Democratic But Value Human Rights

Consider sending this statement to the Democratic National Committee

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## Human Rights Are Not Political Commodities

We understand the same First Amendment that guarantees separation of church and state guarantees the rights of Christian conservatives to defend their views in the public square, and to seek redress of grievances through a variety of political and social channels.

In recent months, however, we have seen indications that some in the leadership of the Democratic Party, and some of its candidates for public office, are seeking the votes of Christian conservatives by suggesting there is room to compromise on reproductive rights and gay rights.

While public debates over social issues are a sign of a healthy democracy; we do not believe is proper for politicians to negotiate away basic human rights for any group of people in the United States.

The problem is not “abortion” or “reducing the number of abortions.” The problem is unwanted pregnancies, how to prevent them, and how to support women who get pregnant in the decisions they deem appropriate. This includes access to legal and safe contraception and abortion; as well as access to health care and child care for women who choose to give birth and raise children—concepts seen as fundamental rights in other industrialized countries. Our rights, and the rights of our friends, relatives, and neighbors who are women, are not political commodities to be traded for votes.

The problem is not “gay rights” or “gay marriage.” The problem is building a society where the basic human rights of all people are respected and defended. Under the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights, there is no such thing as “Special Rights.” When some Christian conservatives claim that gay people want “Special Rights,” it is a falsehood. Our rights, and the rights of our friends, relatives, and neighbors in LGBTQ communities, are not political commodities to be traded for votes.

We intend to vote in the upcoming elections in 2008, and we intend to vote for candidates who make it crystal clear that they support basic human rights for all. At the same time, we will continue to build broad and diverse coalitions seeking fundamental progressive social change. As we rebuild our progressive social movement, we will pay special attention to politicians who

have through words or actions objectively undermined basic human rights for women, the LGBTQ communities, or any other group in our society.

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If you agree with the above statement, visit the contact page for the Democratic National Committee: <http://www.democrats.org/page/s/contactissues>; fill in the contact form with your e-mail and Zip Code; and paste the pledge into the “Questions” box. Or visit <http://www.publiceye.org/jump/kos2007.html> for a link to the online version and URL link.

This is my personal tirade, and is not necessarily connected to any of the several organizations for which I work or volunteer. –Chip Berlet

**Political Research Associates – The Public Eye Magazine – <http://www.publiceye.org>**