Joint Religious Legislative Coalition

**Introduction:** Founded in 1971 as the first interfaith, public-interest lobby group in the United States, the Joint Religious Legislative Coalition (JRLC) is now the most expansive and inclusive bipartisan, multi-issue group of its kind in Minnesota. Using faith-based values to advance the common good, JRLC uniquely builds consensus by encompassing the four largest faith communities in Minnesota (Catholics, Protestants, Jews, and Muslims) all committed to **advocacy rooted in building common ground for the common good**, strong research, and targeted policy recommendations. Minnesota’s civic climate is strengthened by this important cooperative, interfaith organization.

**Major Sponsors and members:** JRLC is authorized and governed by four sponsoring members: The Minnesota Catholic Conference, the Minnesota Council of Churches, the Jewish Community Relations Council of Minnesota and the Dakotas, and the Islamic Center of Minnesota. As a mainstream, multifaith organization, JRLC unites the unique perspectives and wisdom of many different faith communities to promote the well-being of Minnesotans at the Capitol. **Nearly 80 percent of Minnesotans who claim a religious identity are affiliated with a religious sponsor of JRLC.**

**Work and Impact:** JRLC is focused, prudent, and effective in targeting specific bipartisan legislation through civility and respect. We help serve as a resource to elected officials as well as educate Minnesotans on common values and the unique contributions of our major faith traditions. Strong congregational relationships, in-person policy and advocacy forums, legislative update webinars, and the annual Day on the Hill equips people of faith throughout Minnesota to advocate for the common good. Through shared stories, legislator and town hall meetings, JRLC members advance concrete policy objectives that often transcend partisanship. Evidence-based proposals, formal position papers, a firm grounding in our common faith tradition, and long-term credibility among legislators helps us achieve our goals. JRLC taps into deeply held religious principles of justice and equity, resulting in broader collaboration and bi-partisan policy changes.
Recent JRLC Minnesota Legislative successes include:

- Helping pass the Sacred Communities Bill permitting faith-based institutions to support unhoused individuals through the building of “tiny houses.”
- Preventing further expansion of gambling in Minnesota while advocating for additional measures to address the harm presented by gambling.
- Supporting raising child-care reimbursement rate to encourage more high quality providers to expand access to safe and exceptional child care.
- Increasing the Minnesota Families Investment Program (MFIP) benefit.
- Eliminating the marriage penalty for MFIP recipients.

**Faith Leaders’ Summit & Day on the Hill:** JRLC’s largest annual events where hundreds of Minnesotans come together at the state Capitol for a briefing on priority issues, before visiting members of the legislature. *We believe firmly that working for all Minnesotans to thrive is not a partisan effort, or tied to a single faith tradition.* All faith traditions recognize the importance and dignity of each human being, and call on each of us to use our time, talent, and treasure to make our state a better, stronger, more welcoming place for ALL who live here, without regard to income, race, politics, or geography.

**How can you support JRLC?**

With limited resources, JRLC cannot do this work without valuable volunteer support from members from across Minnesota, sharing their time, vision and wisdom. You can get involved by joining JRLC, signing up for our action alerts, becoming a congregational member or a district leader. Go to jrlc.org. Join us today!

**For more Information, contact Leah Patton, Executive Director, at leah@jrlc.org**

**Core Values:** Protection of human dignity, promotion of justice, expanding participation in democracy, cultivating civil dialog, bringing faith-based values into the public square, emphasizing credibility, bold action, and leadership development.

**Mission:** Advocate for public policies that promote the common good in Minnesota.

**Vision:** A vibrant collaboration of faith communities from all regions of MN deeply engaged in effective policy advocacy for common good.

**JRLC.ORG**