



**CHURCH ALLIANCE**  
Acting on Behalf of Church Benefits Programs

Contact **Lisa Drew**  
*Managing Director, Communications*  
*Wespath Investment Management*

Phone # 847-866-4111

E-mail [lidrew@wespath.org](mailto:lidrew@wespath.org)

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## **The Church Alliance Applauds Sen. Collins and Sen. Portman for Standing Up for the Retirement Security of Clergy and Church Lay Workers**

*Glenview, IL*— The Church Alliance commends Senator Susan Collins (R-ME) for her introduction of an amendment to preserve important retirement security provisions for clergy and church lay workers that would be repealed by the tax reform legislation pending in the Senate. Senator Rob Portman (R-OH) joined in co-sponsoring the amendment. The amendment is essential to provide employees of religiously-affiliated organizations with a meaningful opportunity to save for a secure retirement.

“We sincerely appreciate Senator Collins and Senator Portman championing this amendment to protect the interests of clergy and church lay workers in Maine, Ohio and throughout the country,” said Barbara A. Boigegrain, chair of the Church Alliance. “A life in ministry presents special challenges to retirement savings that are addressed by key provisions of the current tax code. This is an important step to ensure that all Americans save and invest for their future, including people of faith who have devoted their lives to religious ministry.”

The Church Alliance is a coalition of chief executive officers of 37 denominational benefit programs, covering mainline and evangelical Protestant denominations, two branches of Judaism, and Catholic schools and institutions. These benefit programs provide pensions and health benefits to more than 1 million clergy, lay workers and their family members. Since its formation in 1975, the Church Alliance has continued to work on tax, pension, securities and health law issues that impact the ability of church pension boards to serve the individuals who dedicate their lives to ministry.

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*The Church Alliance advocated for changes to the church plan definitions in ERISA and the Code. As a result of these efforts, Congress revised the definition of “church plan” in both ERISA and the Code when it passed the Multiemployer Pension Plan Amendments Act of 1980 (MPPAA) to make it clear that a church plan can provide retirement and welfare benefits to employees of all church agencies.*

*The Church Alliance continues to ensure that benefit-related legislative and regulatory initiatives fully address the unique nature of church plans. In addition, in some cases the Church Alliance has acted in a “self-regulatory” manner by advocating for changes that actually limited the tax rules and regulations that govern church benefit plans and clergy participants. As a result, over the years, the Church Alliance has been involved with numerous pieces of legislation (and legislative proposals) that directly impact church benefit plans and programs.*

For more information: [church-alliance.org](http://church-alliance.org)