

# Jubilee Weekend 2015 Action Handbook

## Let There Be Light

**As part of your Jubilee Weekend service or event, we invite you to do a Jubilee Action.**

This year's theme is "Let There Be Light." Jubilee faith communities will act and pray for transparency in the financial system. Specifically, they'll call for transparency at the International Monetary Fund and structures to stop anonymous shell companies from enabling financial crime and moving dirty money around the world.

Please contact Iqra Khan at (202) 783-3566 x105 or at [outreach@jubileeusa.org](mailto:outreach@jubileeusa.org) if you want more materials, have ideas for Jubilee Weekend or need answers to logistical questions.

***Remember to spread the word about Jubilee Weekend!***

**More ways to help proclaim Jubilee for the world's most impoverished:**

- Let your local press know what you have planned. Many smaller local papers are glad to get information about communities getting involved in social justice. Even if your event seems small, many people would be glad to know what you are doing. Jubilee has resources available to help you write a press release. If you are interested, contact us at [outreach@jubileeusa.org](mailto:outreach@jubileeusa.org) at (202) 783-3566 x105.
- Have your clergy or faith leader share what you are doing for service at local clergy meetings. Also, many denominations are part of Jubilee's national Network Council, and some have statements about our work on their websites. You can print out your denomination's statement on our issues to be available for congregation members. A list of Network Council members can be found at [www.jubileeusa.org/about-us/team/network-council.html](http://www.jubileeusa.org/about-us/team/network-council.html).
- Set up a prayer corner in your house of worship. Pray for people living in poverty and for world leaders who make decisions about international finance. Include pictures and short facts. Have a place for individuals to light candles and a journal to write prayers. If the prayer space is in the sanctuary, you might invite people who wish to visit the prayer station to do so at appropriate times during the service.

**Thank you for participating in Jubilee Weekend 2015!**

Please reach out to us anytime if you have questions or want more information by contacting:

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(202) 783-3566 x105  
[outreach@jubileeusa.org](mailto:outreach@jubileeusa.org)

# Let There Be Light – An Action Guide

Win financial transparency policies that benefit the most vulnerable

## Why Transparency Matters at the International Monetary Fund

In the late 1990s, the global Jubilee movement formed to call for debt cancellation for impoverished countries. Since then, Jubilee USA has won critical global financial reforms and more than \$130 billion in debt relief for the world's poorest people.



But debt relief is just the start. Debt relief treats the symptom of a larger problem – a global economic system that worsens poverty and inequality.

This Jubilee Weekend, faith communities across the country will pray and act at the intersection of two big pieces of that system – responsible lending and borrowing and financial transparency.

When international financial institutions like the International Monetary Fund (IMF) loan money to countries in the global south, it's important that they do so in a responsible and transparent manner. The citizens of a country borrowing money should know the terms of the loan deals. They should have a say in the process. And loans should lift countries out of poverty, not intensify inequality and hardship by being attached to harmful austerity conditions. The International Monetary Fund is one of the world's most influential institutions and can make a big impact by setting the gold standard for transparency and accountability.

It all starts with leadership – **this Jubilee Weekend, we're acting and praying for transparency in IMF policies.** This is an important first step toward improving loan transparency and ensuring that poor countries can negotiate responsible, fair loan agreements that reduce debt and poverty.

### **Instructions:**

1. Set aside a time after your worship service where people can gather to sign a petition to the IMF Executive Directors calling for increased transparency. **The petition to the IMF (both a printable version and an online version) will be available on our website at <http://www.jubileeusa.org/get-active/events/jubilee-weekend-2015.html> prior to Jubilee Weekend.** Then send the petitions to us at Jubilee USA Network, Attn Iqra Khan, 212 East Capitol St. NE, Washington DC, 20003.
2. Spread the word! Share the online version of the petition in your networks.

***Did you know? The United States is the only country that has the voting power to unilaterally block proposed policies at the IMF. By engaging elected officials and IMF staff, American citizens can play an important role in promoting transparency and accountability in the global financial system.***

## Why Transparency Matters in the US Financial System

Each year, hundreds of billions of dollars leaves developing countries untaxed through crime, corruption and tax evasion. The vast majority of this money leaves with the help of financial institutions based in developed countries. It's important that the United States support developing countries by making it more difficult for dirty money to flow around the world. Unfortunately, the US ranks third-to-last in the latest Financial Secrecy Index, and a recent study notes the US is the second-easiest country in the world in which to open an anonymous shell company.



*A child receives the polio vaccine. A Ukrainian company used anonymous shell companies based in Oregon to overcharge its government for vaccines, putting millions of kids at risk*

Criminals, terrorists and the corrupt use anonymous shell companies – companies created on paper that don't do significant business and don't disclose their true owners - to defraud our government, evade taxes that could build schools and hospitals in poor countries, fund terrorism, scam the elderly and more. Republicans and Democrats in Congress have introduced legislation that could change that – a simple bill that helps law enforcement figure out who actually owns a fake company. Instead of being part of the problem, the US financial system could become part of the solution.

Jubilee USA is working actively to pass this legislation through Congress. The latest version of the bill hasn't been introduced yet, but very soon the time will be right for communities across the US to contact their member of congress and urge support for transparency and for an end to dirty money flowing freely through our financial system.

### **Instructions:**

1. Sign up today to join our Anonymous Shell Company Rapid Response Team (sign-up sheet is attached as part of this packet). When the time is right, we'll contact you with instructions on how to most effectively urge your members of congress to stop anonymous companies.
2. Share our anonymous shell company one-page resource document with friends and family. It's included in this packet and you can access it online here:  
[http://www.jubileeusa.org/fileadmin/Jubilee\\_Shell\\_Companies\\_One\\_Pager.pdf](http://www.jubileeusa.org/fileadmin/Jubilee_Shell_Companies_One_Pager.pdf)

***Did you know?*** *Infamous arms dealer Viktor Bout used anonymous shell companies based in Florida, Delaware and Texas to funnel money around the world. A Ukrainian company used anonymous companies based in Oregon to overcharge the government for polio vaccinations, putting millions of Ukrainian children at risk.*



## **YES! I Want to Join the Jubilee USA Anonymous Shell Company Rapid Response Team**

Anonymous shell companies allow criminals and the corrupt to move dirty money around the world, harming the most vulnerable here in the United States and across the globe. Anonymous shell companies are part of a broader problem of financial secrecy that allows money to flow freely out of the countries where it's needed the most and into western bank accounts, tax havens and high-end real estate.

The United States is the second easiest country in the world in which to set up a fake company and not disclose its true owner.

The Incorporation Transparency and Law Enforcement Assistance Act would change that. The bill has bipartisan support – traditional supporters include Rep. Carolyn Maloney (D-NY), Rep. Peter King (R-NY), Rep. Mike Fitzpatrick (R-PA), Rep. Maxine Waters (D-CA), Senator Carl Levin (D-MI, retired) and Senator Charles Grassley (R-IA).

The bill hasn't been reintroduced yet in this Congress but there is growing interest and support for it among both parties. When the time is right, **can we count on you to join us in calling on Congress to support transparency, protect the most vulnerable and stop anonymous shell companies?**

**Yes! I want to join the Jubilee USA Anonymous Shell Company Rapid Response Team!**

**NAME:**

**EMAIL:**

**ZIPCODE:**

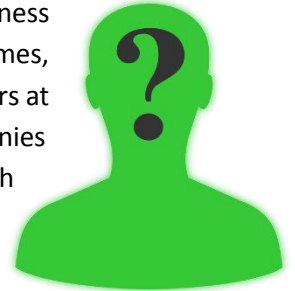


# Anonymous Shell Companies

*Jubilee USA works to reform the global economic system and end the root causes of extreme poverty. Our efforts build an inclusive global economy that leaves nobody behind.*

## Background

Anonymous shell companies are corporations created on paper that don't do significant business and don't disclose the company's true owner. They are often used as vehicles for financial crimes, including tax evasion, Medicare fraud, terrorism, drug dealing and weapons dealing. Our partners at Global Witness call these companies the "getaway cars" for financial crime. Shell companies contribute to the estimated one trillion dollars that leaves the developing world annually through crime, tax evasion and corruption. This flow of dirty money takes resources away from the world's poorest countries and their people.



The United States is the second-easiest country in the world in which to open an anonymous shell company, after Kenya. In many states, creating a shell company requires less information than acquiring a driver's license. When someone forms a company in the US, they do not have to disclose the real people who profit from its existence or activities, known as "beneficial owners." Instead, individuals can conceal their identity by using front people (such as a lawyer) to represent the company.

Financial transparency is critical to ending poverty and protecting both resources and tax revenues in poor countries. Here in the United States, we have an important role to play in promoting transparency and stopping the flow of dirty money out of developing countries.

## Solution

The bi-partisan Incorporation Transparency and Law Enforcement Assistance Act would ensure that companies formed in the United States disclose their true owners. This will make it much easier for law enforcement to track down criminals and prosecute and prevent illegal activity. Corporate transparency can reduce the flow of dirty money and ensure that vulnerable populations can access resources to build schools, hospitals and infrastructure. This bill will make it harder for those stealing from the most vulnerable to use the United States financial system as their "getaway car."

## Get Involved

Jubilee USA and its partners work actively to win policies that improve corporate transparency and reduce crime generated by anonymous companies. If you're interested in getting involved in our work, contact Andrew Hanauer: [Andrew@jubileeusa.org](mailto:Andrew@jubileeusa.org) or (202)783-3566 x 100.

*Jubilee USA Network is an alliance of more than 75 US organizations, 400 faith communities and 50 Jubilee global partners. Jubilee's mission is to build an economy that serves, protects and promotes the participation of the most vulnerable. Jubilee USA Network has won critical global financial reforms and more than 130 billion dollars in debt relief for the world's poorest people.*

*Jubilee USA Network – 212 East Capitol St NE – Washington, DC 20003 – [www.jubileeusa.org](http://www.jubileeusa.org)*