
DANGER! Equality Act, Half-way through Congress

"The Chamber looks forward to the enactment of the Equality Act."

– U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Neil L. Bradley, Executive V.P. and Chief Policy Officer, Letter to Congress April 9, 2019

H.R. 5, introduced by U.S. Congressman D. N. Cicilline (D-RI-1) March 13, 2019, passed the U.S. House May 17th and is in the Senate Judiciary Committee, where it needs to die.

Congressional Overview of H.R. 5

- H.R. 5, specifically, prohibits discrimination or segregation based on sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity in public accommodations¹ and facilities, education, federal funding, employment, housing, credit, and the jury system. [*Discriminates against biological sexes.*]
- H.R. 5 allows the Department of Justice to intervene in equal protection actions in federal court on account of sexual orientation or gender identity. [*Pits DOJ against heterosexuals.*]
- H.R. 5 prohibits discrimination based on (1) associating with a person in a protected class; or (2) anyone perceived or believed to be in a protected class. [*Denies freedom of association.*]
- H.R. 5 prohibits the Religious² Freedom Restoration Act of 1993 from providing a claim, defense, or basis for challenging such protection. [*Denies use of religious freedom laws.*]
- Access to shared facilities, including restrooms, locker rooms, and dressing rooms cannot be denied to anyone claiming an opposite-sex gender identity preference. [*Destroys privacy.*]

H.R. 5 deletes the word "sex" from the 1964 Civil Rights Act and replaces it with "sex, sexual orientation, gender identity" to federally protect sexual behaviors. The Democrat House Judiciary chairman's expression of support: "Religion is no excuse for discrimination when it comes to sexual orientation or gender identity." [*Protects sexual acts, defies religious beliefs.*]

H.R. 5 would render illegal the constitutional right to religious freedom. Federal departments and agencies could penalize churches, religious schools, and organizations for expressing faith-based beliefs about marriage, sexual morality and distinguishing between males and females.

Such penalties include the loss of federal funding for women's shelters, unless biological men who identify as women are allowed to share with women the shelter's sleeping facilities. Also, Adoption/foster care agencies lose funds if placement is only to married, opposite-sex couples.

Sound Bites

- Churches will be forced to host same-sex ceremonies or lose tax-exempt status.
- Noncompliant religious colleges lose accreditation and become ineligible for student loans.
- On overnight trips, religious entities could not segregate sleeping space by biological sex.
- Churches would be forced to hire LGBTQ+ child care staff, and allow them to diaper.

ACTION – Ask U.S. senators to vote NO (1) Call Senator Johnny Isakson at 770-661-0999, or in D.C., 202 224-3643. (2) Call Senator David Perdue at 404 865-0087, or in D.C., 202 224-3521. Call both in D.C. toll-free at 1 877 762-8762. (3) Call 1 877 762-8762 and ask Senate Judiciary Chairman Lindsey Graham (R-SC) to keep H.R. 5 in committee.

¹ Expands public accommodations definition to include places or establishments that provide (1) exhibitions, recreation, exercise, amusement, gatherings, or displays; (2) goods, services, or programs; and (3) transportation services.

² H.R. 5 does not include a religious exemption and prohibits the use of federal and state RFRA laws to defend beliefs.

Multiple Discriminations in H.B. 580, Georgia's Conversion Therapy Ban¹

H.B. 580 would be a Red Stop Light for Conservative Counselors and a

Green Go-Ahead Light for Compliant Counselors.

H.B. 580 Affirms Pro LGBTQ+ Counseling Strategies and

Penalizes Negative Counseling about LGBTQ+.

H.B. 580 Denies Religious Freedom and

Overrides Parental Rights

While protection of alternate lifestyle decisions is the overt focus of H.B. 580, other critically important questions raised by this bill are (a) whether speech as defined in H.B. 580 should be politically controlled; (b) whether freedom of speech is constitutionally protected; (c) whether parents' right to influence children's lifestyles can be nullified; (d) whether religious speech, expression and association are constitutionally protected for parents, minors and professionals; and (e) whether local governmental power supersedes *The Constitution of the United States*.

H.B. 580 Practice of Conversion Therapy, Prohibit, introduced by Representative Matthew Wilson in the Georgia General Assembly on March 7th, endangers established moral standards. It (a) *prohibits counseling against sexual orientation and gender identity*, (b) *but authorizes positive counseling and assistance toward personal adoption of variant lifestyles*. Violators will be deemed unprofessional and subject to discipline or loss of professional licenses.

Although it failed to pass in 2019, H.B. 580 is alive for the 2020 session. If it passes and is not vetoed, the state could intervene in patient/counselor discussions and treatment, intrude into parental authority over minor children, interfere with the constitutional right to free speech, and limit the freedoms of religious speech, expression and association. Such facts are in the bill.

H.B. 580 changes laws for professional counselors, physicians and psychologists.

43-10A-2.1 applies to counselors; 43-34-22.1 covers physicians; 43-39-6.1 limits psychologists. Paragraphs (a), (b) and (c) are worded identically in each section and are outlined as follows:

Each paragraph (a) entitles the new law the "Youth Mental Health Protection Act."

Each paragraph (b) explains what the new law authorizes and what it prohibits, as follows:

1. H.B. 580 *prohibits* conversion therapy or treatment if it is designed to (a) change a person's sexual orientation or gender identity or (b) behavior or expression or (c) eliminate or reduce sexual attractions or feelings toward the same gender².
2. Contrarily, H.B. 580 *specifically authorizes* professional counselors to *affirm and assist* anyone in transition and *affirm variant lifestyle choices* for those struggling to decide.

Each paragraph (c) makes two points:

1. Anyone under age 18 cannot be subjected to conversion therapy; [*Defies parental control.*]
2. Violators of this new law will be considered unconstitutional and could lose licensure.

ACTION – Oppose. Call House Regulated Industries Committee Representatives Powell, A. Ch., 404 463-3793; Jones, Jeff, V-Ch. 656-0178; Hawkins, Sec., 656-7855; Bennett*, 656-0202; Caldwell, 656-0152; Carpenter, 656-1803; Collins, 656-1803; Cooke, 656-0188; Cooper, 656-5069, Ehrhart, 656-0152; Harrell, 656-5103; Jasperse, 656-5943; Jones, Jan, 656-5072; Kirby, 656-0177; Martin, 656-5064; Mitchell*, 656-0126; Ridley, 656-0325; Rogers, 651-7737; Rutledge, 656-0254; Smith*, 656-0265; Stephens*, 656-0265; Washburn, 656-0152; Welch, 656-5912; Williams, 656-0287; and Williamson, 656-5024. (* DENOTES DEMOCRAT)

¹ 16 states that ban conversion therapy: California (2012), New Jersey (2013), Oregon (2015), Illinois (2015), Vermont (2016), Rhode Island (2017), New Mexico (2017), Connecticut (2017), Nevada (2017), Washington (2018), Maryland (2018), Hawaii (2018), New Hampshire (2018), Delaware (2018), New York, (2019), Massachusetts (2019)

After H.B. 580 failed to pass during this session, the Atlanta City Council unanimously voted to oppose it in mid-April.

² Gender and sex are not synonyms. Gender means sexual behavior. Sex refers to male and female biological identity.

“Bring Your Bible to School Day” Began in 2014

The Washington Post announced the first Bring Your Bible to School Day on October 16, 2014, its initial day of observance. Also, the *Post* cited legal advice from Alliance Defending Freedom that reminded schools of students’ rights to bring Bibles to school, then distribute and discuss them with classmates during non-instructional time – at lunch, while walking between classes, as well as before and after school. Also, ADF cautioned schools NOT to censor the Bible, unless identical standards apply to activities schools allow during non-instructional time.

This Year’s “Bring Your Bible to School Day”

Excerpts from Focus on the Family Article Online

“Focus on the Family, Helping Families Thrive™

“Be a Part of the Movement to Express Our Faith

**“Join more than a half a million students on October 3 and
“Bring Your Bible to School!**

“Don’t let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity,’ says 1 Timothy 4:12.

“Christian students have a powerful voice of hope in their school! In the Bible, it’s often young people who lead the way for the rest of their culture by providing an example of spiritual boldness and taking a courageous stand for their belief in God. We see this in the books of Daniel and Esther, which tell the stories of a young man and woman, who, despite their youth, had the courage to share God’s truth and love with an unbelieving culture.

“As increasing levels of censorship and punishment for Christian values arise, students should feel empowered to express their faith because of the freedoms we’ve been given.

“On October 3, 2019, **we celebrate this religious freedom and encourage students to bring their own Bible to school!** This day is a national movement to encourage students across the US to express their belief in the truth of God’s Word and demonstrate Christ’s love.

“Will you join the movement and encourage your student to bring their Bible to school?

“Once you sign-up¹ to participate, you will get:

- A Bring Your Bible to School age-appropriate guide
- Downloadable posters, stickers and t-shirts designs, and other fun interactive activities
- Information on your legal rights
- **Entered for a chance to win a trip for four to the Museum of the Bible in Washington D.C!** Read official giveaway rules.

“Fill out the form¹ below to let us know you are participating. We want to empower over half a million students and you can be one of them! (No purchase is necessary for the entry into the Museum of the Bible trip giveaway. Read official giveaway rules.) If you are under the age of 13, please have your parent fill out all of the information below, using the parent’s (or legal guardian’s) name and information.

“Don’t delay. Bring Your Bible to School Day is quickly approaching!

¹ Individual students, schools and churches may register online at BringYourBible.org, and Focus On the Family at <https://focusonthefamily.webconnex.com/co-oct3-bybts2019>.)

New Orleans Saints Quarterback Gets Backlash for Supporting Bible

Excerpts from www.ChristianHeadlines.com/blog/drew-brees

“Bring Your Bible to School Day” has been taking place every year since 2014, moving students to ‘celebrate religious freedom and share God’s love with their friends.’

Brees’ video, which was all of 22 seconds, encouraged students to bring their [B]ibles to school, and join the movement in which thousands of students have participated.

“Hey guys,’ Brees says in the video, “one of my favorite verses in the Bible is 2 Corinthians 5:7, ‘For we live by faith, not by sight.’”

“So I want to encourage you to live out your faith on ‘Bring your Bible to School Day’ and share God’s love with friends,” Brees adds. “You’re not alone.”

The 22-second video has since then received flack from left-leaning publications who are bashing Brees for working with an organization that promotes traditional marriage.

#BringYourBible to School Day 2019: October 3

Quoted below: Article by National Religious Broadcasters, Published September 19, 2019
Accessed 9-23-19 <http://nrb.org/news-room/articles/nrbt/bringyourbible-school-day-2019-october-3/>

Hundreds of thousands of students across the United States will celebrate religious freedom and share God’s love with their friends as they join the Bring Your Bible to School movement on Thursday, October 3.

The annual student-led event, now in its sixth year, provides a unique opportunity for young people to share about their faith by highlighting its source – the Bible.

“The nation’s Judeo-Christian heritage protects their right to boldly, authentically and freely live out their faith—without fear of reprisal,” noted Jim Daly, President of Focus on the Family, which sponsors the annual event. “That’s the heart and vision behind Bring Your Bible to School Day.”

Bring Your Bible to School Day is designed to empower students to express their belief in the Truth of God’s Word – and to do so in a respectful way that demonstrates the love of Christ.

Participation is voluntary and student-directed – meaning it’s completely up to students, Christian clubs, and youth groups to sign up online and then lead the activities in their school.

Students can find more information, including the official video and stories from students, parents, and a few celebrities at BringYourBible.org, where they also can sign up to participate and get a free, downloadable guide with easy tips on how to get started. Also available are downloadable posters, sticker and T-shirt designs, information on the legal rights of students, and ways to respond to challenges, as well as other fun, interactive activities.

In addition, students can follow “Bring Your Bible to School Day” on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Throughout the day, children and teens will share their experiences via social media using the official hashtag #BringYourBible.

And, like past years, Christian legal group Alliance Defending Freedom is again partnering with Focus on the Family to offer students free legal assistance as deemed appropriate for Bring Your Bible to School Day students who encounter unconstitutional roadblocks to their free speech rights. Call 1-800-TELL-ADF to reach ADF’s team of experienced lawyers, who will be ready and willing to help remove any unconstitutional or improper roadblocks.

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