



A GRAVE CONCERN FOR CHRISTIANS IN AMERICA

A BROAD AND UNCONSTITUTIONAL SWEEP AGAINST RELIGIOUS LIBERTY—SENATE BILL 1146

In current deliberation among California legislators is Senate Bill 1146. We are gravely disturbed by this bill that strikes a direct blow to religious liberty and severely infringes on personal freedoms and the freedoms of Christian institutions in California.

The so-called “Equity in Higher Education Act” is designed to erode the free exercise of religion given us in both the United States Constitution and the California Constitution, by limiting the involvement of colleges to have students, faculty, and employees live according to the dictates of God’s Word.

This bill reads, in part,

“Nothing in this section shall be construed to permit discrimination on the basis of disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code, including the perception that the person has any of those characteristics or that the person is associated with a person who has, or is perceived to have, any of those characteristics.”

Christian people throughout our state should staunchly oppose this bill that erodes religious liberty

and opens the door for the state to impede our purpose of “training laborers for the harvest.”

As Bible-believing Christians, we believe that every person is made in the image of God and is thus worthy of and should be treated with respect. We cannot, however, change our biblical convictions regarding morality and adherence to a biblical moral code.

SB1146 purports to protect against discrimination. This bill, however, is a form of discrimination against religious liberty itself. In the words of Senator John Moorlach, “Restricting private institutions from adhering to its religious beliefs is a violation of their First Amendment rights and an act itself of intolerance.”

The Constitution prohibits laws which impede religious and biblically-held beliefs. Christian colleges for hundreds of years, have had biblically-based codes of conduct prohibiting extra-marital sex and other activities prohibited by Scripture.

Not only would this bill impact an institution’s ability to hire or retain staff and accept students based on faith-based practices and morality, but it would impact students themselves who wish to seek education at an institution that aligns with their beliefs. If passed as law, this bill would reach into the dorms, locker rooms, restrooms, and even the academic and spiritual programs of institutions. The bill also creates a system whereby faith-based institutions must report their beliefs before the state, in essence, for approval.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

1. Contact Legislators

SB1146 has already been passed by the California Senate and was sent to the California Assembly. It is now in the Assembly Judiciary Committee where it is scheduled for a final hearing and vote on Tuesday, June 28 at 9:00 a.m.

Our goal is to stop the bill at the Judiciary Committee. If this does not happen, it will then be presented to the Assembly for vote and returned to the Senate, and we anticipate it to reach the governor’s desk and be signed into law. From there, we are prepared to stand against this bill in the courts if need be.

However, the best time and place to stop this bill is now while it is in the Judiciary Committee. **The Judiciary Committee is comprised of just ten members. We are asking that you would contact each of them today.**

We ask that you call and email each member of the Judiciary Committee. On the back is a suggested email and a suggested phone script. Also listed is the contact information for each member of the committee.

2. Spread the Word

We also ask that you spread the word among other Christians, particularly those who live in California. Ask them to call and email as well.

You can also voice your concerns on social media. The website opposeSB1146.com provides suggested posts for social media including downloadable images and sample posts.

3. Pray

Finally, please pray. Proverbs 21:1 reminds us, “The king’s heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will.” And Hebrews 11:33 tells us of Christians “Who through faith subdued kingdoms...”

We do not know what will come of this particular bill. We are confident that if it does pass it will be a significant and dangerous move toward government-imposed restriction on religious liberty.

Ultimately, we trust the Lord and know we will continue in the work of the Great Commission. Whatever comes of this moment, we do not want to be guilty of not taking action, and we ask you to do the same.

MEMBERS OF THE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE WITH CONTACT INFORMATION

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Suggested Email Text

Dear Assembly Member [Last Name],

I am greatly concerned about SB 1146. This bill violates the religious expression of students and faculty in religious colleges and universities and imposes on our constitutional rights, as the Constitution states that the government is not to make any law prohibiting the free exercise of religion.

For hundreds of years, Christian colleges have had a Bible-based code of conduct as part of their biblically-guided operational policies. Therefore, no need for this bill exists, as students should continue to have the freedom to attend an institution that aligns with their own religious beliefs, morality, and expression.

This bill infringes on the religious rights of colleges to act, and faculty and students to live, according to the religious and moral dictates of their faith.

I ask you to vote against SB 1146.

Sincerely,
[Your Name]

Suggested Phone Message

Hello, my name is [your name], and I am a resident of [county], California.

I want to urge assembly member [last name] to vote against SB 1146 in the Judiciary Committee hearing on Tuesday, as this bill infringes on religious liberty.
Thank you.