



Biblical Citizenship Briefing

January 2023

This briefing is strictly for your information. It is a summary of some current public policy issues, including pending legislation, that involve moral and biblical principles. While suggested action may be included from time to time, no specific position by EFCC is implied. If you do not wish to receive further briefings of this nature, please unsubscribe as shown at the bottom of this document.

In California

What's in Store in the 2023 Legislative Session? – As of January 12, fewer than 350 bills have been put forward by the 120 members of the California Senate and Assembly in the first year of the 2023-24 legislative session, but that number will swell to approximately 2,000 by the February 17 introduction deadline. Policy hearings will begin in late February and continue into April.

Some bills that were not successful last year have been reintroduced by their authors. One of these is Sen. Shannon Grove's (R-Bakersfield) bill ([SB 14](#)) to designate human trafficking a serious and violent felony, and making the crime eligible for the Three Strikes Law. Despite strong support from law enforcement and organizations serving victims, last year's version died in the challenging Senate Public Safety Committee. To learn more, visit Sen. Grove's website [here](#).

Sen. Scott Wiener (D-San Francisco) has brought back his bill to decriminalize certain hallucinogens. [SB 58](#) will allow the personal use of psychedelics including magic mushrooms and mescaline for persons 21 and over. Last year's bill would have also normalized the use of LSD and ecstasy, but the author removed those from SB 58. Read more [here](#).

Last year, more than a dozen bills to expand abortion in the Golden State were signed into law, but apparently proponents feel there is still work to do to ensure that abortion access is essentially unlimited. The Future of Abortion Council document outlining last year's goals now has an [addendum](#). This document not only lists their "accomplishments" in the new laws and policies that have now taken effect (pages 8-9), but also recommendations for new bills we can expect to see introduced this year (pages 10-14). One of the most troubling recommendations would establish a state-funded campaign targeting crisis pregnancy centers (CPCs) and medical clinics. The report falsely claims, "Many CPCs use deceitful and harmful practices that include deceptive marketing, make false medical claims, and often provide limited medical services, misleading people, delaying care, and harming people's health." They plan to launch "a coordinated statewide communications and outreach strategy to reach communities targeted by CPCs and those impacted by the digital divide."

Pray – Father, we continue to ask You to direct women facing unplanned pregnancies to life-affirming clinics – the very clinics that now the state may try to harm using our tax money. Please protect the good work being done to save lives and bring many young mothers to Christ in the process. Keep the clinics themselves from destruction by vandals and those with evil intent. Be glorified, Father, in the tiny lives saved and the testimonies they will tell. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Female Prisoners Suffer from "Unintended Consequences" – In September 2020, Gov. Newsom [signed SB 132](#) into law. Now, the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) is required to house inmates based on their declared gender identity. No "gender reassignment" treatments or surgeries are required – just a declaration by the inmate, after which they must be "housed at a correctional facility designated for men or women based on the individual's preference." Conservative organizations raised objections about the obvious potential consequences of biological men being housed with women in close quarters and with no treatment requirements. They were joined by the progressive feminist groups that also saw the danger, but the bill still passed.

SB 132 went into effect on January 1, 2021 and by that July nearly 300 requests for transfer had been made. Since then, incarcerated women have been the target of assaults and rapes. Medical rooms inside the prisons offer pregnancy resources and free condoms.

On November 17, 2021, the progressive organization Women's Liberation Front filed a [civil rights lawsuit](#) against the CDCR in response to SB 132. Dr. Mahri Irvine, WoLF Executive Director, stated, "Women and girls deserve to be treated with dignity, respect, and compassion. CDCR has unequivocally violated the basic human rights of incarcerated women by subjecting them to traumatizing, terrifying conditions. WoLF stands alongside these women. We will continue to fight for them until their safety and dignity are restored."

Women are speaking out about their experiences, and many of these have been included on the [WoLF website](#) dedicated to their lawsuit. One woman declares, "I do not agree with Senate Bill 132 that was written by Senator Wiener, and irresponsibly signed by Governor Newsom, that says the bill will 'support the CDCR's efforts to provide a safe, human, respectful and rehabilitative environment for incarcerated transgender, non-binary, and intersex community.' What about the women who will be made to house with them? What about us, who are not physically as strong as them, forced to be living with them behind a LOCKED door!?" In a recorded phone call with her attorney, another female inmate states, "Hopelessness is consuming this prison." Please pray for their protection. Read more [here](#).

In Congress

Born Alive Bill Passes House – As the 118th Congress begins business, pro-life leaders are pleased that already two of their priorities have been passed by the U.S. House. On January 11, the “Born Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act” ([H.R. 26](#)) passed [220-210](#). The bill states, “If an abortion results in the live birth of an infant, the infant is a legal person for all purposes under the laws of the United States, and entitled to all the protections of such laws.” H.R. 26 is unlikely to be brought up in the Senate. The House also passed ([222-209](#)) a resolution ([H. Con. Res. 3](#)) condemning attacks on pro-life facilities and churches, and calling on the Biden Administration to use law enforcement to protect their rights. The resolution also recognizes the important role pro-life organizations play in assisting pregnant women, infants and families.

Other priorities to be taken up include protecting the conscience rights of doctors who refuse to perform abortions, protecting individuals with Down Syndrome and banning abortions after the baby’s heartbeat is detected. Read more [here](#).

In the Courts

High Court Hears Free Speech Case – Last month, the U.S. Supreme Court heard [oral arguments](#) in [303 Creative v. Elenis](#). Lorie Smith owns [303 Creative](#), a business that provides marketing, graphics and website design, but also creates websites that convey messages about clients’ impending weddings consistent with her biblical values. If clients request that she create a design for a same-sex wedding, Smith would politely decline, but remains happy to serve the individuals in a manner that did not share such a message. The State of Colorado does not believe Smith has a right to decline and, according to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 10th Circuit’s 2021 [ruling](#), she could be forced to create designs that violate her beliefs. Alliance Defending Freedom CEO Kristin Waggoner, who argued the case before the high court, stated, “Free speech is for everyone. No one should be forced to say something they don’t believe. And Lorie works with everyone. Whether she custom designs a website or graphic always turns on *what* the message is, not *who* is requesting it.” The Court will likely hand down its decision this summer – one with significant implications for speech, conscience, and religious rights. Read more [here](#) and [here](#).

In the News

Walk to Raise Awareness Planned – January is National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month. To help shine a bright light on the darkness of human trafficking in our area, the [17th Annual Human Trafficking Awareness Walk](#) will take place in Vista on Saturday, January 28. The event, begins with registration at 10:00 am and guest speaker Susan Johnson of [Alabaster Jar Project](#) at 10:30. At 11:00 there will be a 1.5 mile walk for awareness – signs are provided. Location: United Methodist Church of Vista, 490 S. Melrose Drive. A \$10 donation is suggested but not required.

Find out more about important topic at the [National Human Trafficking Hotline](#). If you suspect a trafficking situation, call the hotline at 888-373-7888 or text 233733 (BeFree). Of course, if anyone is in immediate danger dial 911.

Walgreens and CVS to Dispense Medication Abortion Pills – Until December 2021, the two-pill abortion cocktail of misoprostol and mifepristone, known as RU-486, the “abortion pill” or medication abortion, was only available under medical supervision and dispensed in a hospital or clinic. What is the procedure? The Daily Signal explains, “The first pill in the process, mifepristone, kills the unborn child by cutting off a hormone called progesterone, which is required to sustain a pregnancy. The second pill, misoprostol, causes contractions to empty the uterus. Together, this regimen is approved to be used up to 70 days (10 weeks) into pregnancy.” Prior to dispensing the drugs, the Risk Evaluation and Mitigation Strategy (REMS) called for an ultrasound to be performed to ensure that the child was, in fact, under 10 weeks gestation and that the pregnancy was not in the fallopian tube (ectopic).

This changed last year when the FDA weakened REMS to allow for telemedicine and mail-order prescriptions for these early abortions. Convenience has been enhanced, but [so has the risk](#). Then, on January 3, the Biden Administration issued a new FDA [rule](#) allowing certified pharmacies to dispense the abortion pill. Thus, a woman could conceivably meet with a physician in a tele-medicine visit and then pick up the prescription at Walgreens or CVS, two of the pharmacies planning to become certified. Together these two chains have nearly 19,000 stores that will essentially become abortion providers. It is unknown whether accommodations will be made for employees who object to participating. Read more [here](#). If this policy concerns you, Family Policy Alliance provides a draft letter that will be sent to the major pharmacy and grocery chains [here](#).

Pray – Father, please help the women who see this abortion method as a remedy for their situation. The tiny baby they hold within them just needs time to grow. These abortions not only starve the child, but also involve a long and excruciating delivery of the baby’s remains. Father, turn their hearts and create a desire to save the baby to raise themselves or offer for adoption. Help them choose life. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

This briefing was prepared by the EFCC Biblical Citizenship Committee. Referrals to websites are for informational purposes, and do not necessarily imply an endorsement by EFCC of the contents of those sites. To subscribe or unsubscribe, or if you have any questions, please e-mail Penny Harrington (penny.harrington@cox.net ; 760.224.4744 www.efcc.org/biblical-citizenship