



Biblical Citizenship Briefing

June 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. Find contact and subscription information at the end of this document.

In California

Second Verse Same as the First – Of the 2,661 bills introduced by California legislators this year, 1,713 California bills surviving the committee process and floor votes in their house of origin are now in the opposite house. The process in the second house is the same as the first, with policy committee hearings already underway. To make your voice heard on legislation during the committee process submit a letter through the legislative portal at calegislation.lc.ca.gov/Advocates. Just registering once allows you to submit a letter (PDF file) for any bill, making your opinion available to all committee members. It's also important to contact your assembly member and state senator asking them to support or oppose bills that concern you. Check the bill list link on the next page for current status before contacting lawmakers. Keep in mind that bills are in the SECOND house so, for example, AB 123 is now in the Senate and SB 123 is now in the Assembly. Find your California legislators at findyourrep.legislature.ca.gov. Below are several bills that have already passed their policy committee in the second house.

Bill Seeks "Fertility Equality" – [SB 729](#) (Caroline Menjivar, D-Van Nuys) is one of a dozen priority bills for the LGBTQ+ advocacy organization [Equality California](#). It will require group health insurance policies to cover infertility treatments based on a redefinition of "infertility" to mean "a disease, condition, or *status* characterized by... (2) A person's inability to reproduce either as an individual or with their partner without medical intervention" (emphasis added). Menjivar says her bill "will ensure that queer couples no longer have to pay more out of pocket to start families than non-queer families ... This bill is critical to achieving full-lived equality for LGBTQ+ people." The concept of "fertility equality" was pioneered by the organization "[Men Having Babies](#)," which is affiliated with one of SB 729's co-sponsors, RESOLVE: The National Infertility Association. Emma Waters, a research associate at the Heritage Foundation stated, "For single men or male same-sex couples, this means they would need to access a surrogate to carry their child. So, the bill is outlining what adults have the right to, but nowhere does it address the needs of the child or safety concerns regarding the child either in IVF or in gestational surrogacy." Read more [here](#).

Regarding the cost impact to all Californians, the legislative analyst notes that "California business and insurance groups have objected to the bill's projected price tag for employers" and that "according to [an analysis](#) by the California Health Benefits Review Program, the coverage mandates would raise annual premiums for employer-sponsored plans by more than \$330 million a year. The California Association of Health Plans said the coverage mandates are the most expensive of 16 that the legislature is considering, which together would add about \$1 billion to the premiums." Status: SB 729 [passed](#) the Senate on May 24 and will be heard in the [Assembly Health Comm.](#) soon. Consider contacting your assembly member with your views.

"Non-affirming" Parents Could Risk Losing Custody – [AB 957](#) (Lori Wilson, D-Vacaville) requires courts determining custody and visitation to consider that "the health, safety, and welfare of the child includes a parent's affirmation of the child's gender identity." Therefore, the parent who opposes his or her child receiving puberty blockers, life-altering surgeries and other interventions with potential long-term consequences could lose custody and/or contact with the child. Erin Friday, a mother and attorney in San Francisco who co-leads the parent group [Our Duty](#), is troubled by the amended language. She warns, "When you say that gender affirmation is in the child's best interest for health, safety, and welfare, it takes nothing to say [non-affirmation] is now abuse—because you're not taking care of the health, safety, and welfare if you're not affirming them." [Real Impact states](#), "By including a 'parent's affirmation of the child's gender identity' in California's definition of the 'health, safety, and welfare' of a child, California law will villainize the parents who hold biblical views on gender ... Dividing a family for the purpose of advancing radical gender-ideology is an incredible overreach of government power and will have devastating effects on families throughout California." Read more [here](#) and [here](#).

Status: AB 957 [passed](#) the Assembly on March 30 and the Senate Judiciary Comm. June 13. It now heads to Senate floor. Consider contacting your state senator with your views.

Poll Reveals Strong Support for Parental Rights among California Voters – Several controversial bills moving through the legislature involve the role of parents in their children's lives and education. With school policies often keeping parents in the dark about "sensitive issues" involving mental and reproductive health, as well as gender confusion or dysphoria, what do voters think? On June 12, Rasmussen Reports and Real Impact released the results of a May 18 telephone and online [poll](#) of 1,305 likely California voters regarding parental rights. The survey showed that 91 percent believe parents, not the government, have the bigger responsibility to raise a child, with 82 percent disagreeing with the statement, "A person loses their parental rights when a child enters public school." Sixty-eight percent oppose teachers and school administrators keeping information about a child's gender identity secret from the parents, with just 24 percent of voters in support of schools keeping students' gender identity secret from parents.

When asked about minors' ability to make life decisions, only 24 percent of California voters believe that, at 12 years of age, a child is mature enough to consent to mental health treatment, counseling, or shelter services without their parents knowing – 63 percent disagree, while 12 percent are not sure. This is the crux of [AB 665](#), which passed the Assembly and will be heard in the [Senate Judiciary Comm.](#) on June 20. Read more [here](#). Consider contacting your state senator with your views.

In a separate [poll](#), by a 3-to-1 margin, Americans believe there are only two genders, and a majority support laws against transgender treatment for minors.

Find the current status of these bills and many more in several different topic areas, at judeochristiancaucus.com/bills-and-resolutions. (Referral for informational purposes only, does not imply an endorsement by EFCC of the opinions, positions or contents of the site.)

California Legislature Honors Member of Blasphemous Drag Group – On June 5, both state houses passed “Pride Month” resolutions ([HR 33](#) and [SR 33](#)), followed by separate ceremonies honoring more than a dozen members of the LGBTQ+ community, including one of the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence (SPI). Sen. Scott Wiener told the Senate that “Sister Roma” has raised more than \$1 million for the LGBT community and social justice causes. However, SPI, whose motto is “Go forth and sin some more,” also mocks Catholic nuns with their garish costumes, and sponsors an Easter drag show that portrays the crucifixion of Christ with “Mary” performing a pole dance up and down the cross. Reacting to the planned ceremony, Senate Minority Leader Brian Jones (R-San Diego) [condemned](#) the SPI invitation and authored a [letter](#) on behalf of his caucus to Senate President pro Tem Toni Atkins (D-San Diego) requesting that it be withdrawn. He stated that the group is “well-known for their public denigration of the Catholic faith” and that the invitation “sends a troubling message to Californians of all faiths.” The request was denied. Assembly Republicans left the chamber in protest during “Sister Roma’s” recognition.

During the ceremonies inside, hundreds gathered at the west steps of the Capitol to attend a prayer vigil hosted by California Family Council, American Council, and California Catholic Conference. The juxtaposition was stark. Inside “Sister Roma” was blowing kisses to state leaders on the Assembly floor, while pastors were praying, and worship songs were being sung outside. Assembly Minority Leader James Gallagher (R-Chico) spoke passionately to the crowd saying, “We had to walk out today in conscience, because we could not stand for religious bigotry anywhere ... As a Christian, I know that’s why we are gathered here today because we felt that hurt of our faith that we hold so dear being denigrated, being held in such a vulgar light ... This [gathering] is an opportunity for us to show how Christians love ... I want to pray for the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence. I want to pray that they be reconciled, because the truth of Jesus Christ is for all.” He thanked those in attendance for their prayers, asking that they would continue to pray over all the leaders in the Legislature to come to the knowledge of Jesus so that hearts would be changed, and our nation would be changed. (See Gallagher’s remarks at 27:00 on the video [here](#).)

Pray – Father, we ask You to draw our lawmakers to salvation and Your truth. We pray Your Word over them from Ezekiel 36:25-27. *I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws.* In Jesus’ name, Amen.

In the Courts

California Settles Lawsuit with Christian Medical Association – Last year, Alliance Defending Freedom (ADF) filed a [complaint](#) on behalf of a Christian hospice physician and the Christian Medical and Dental Association challenging the state’s ability to force doctors to participate in physician-assisted suicide under the “End of Life Option Act” (EOLOA) against their professional ethics and religious convictions. The law was [enjoined](#) last September when the U.S. District Court for Central California held that the law violated the First Amendment by requiring participation in the EOLOA. On May 17, the Court issued its final judgment against the state. As part of the settlement, the state of California agreed not to enforce “any criminal or civil punishment, including professional discipline or licensing sanction for a California-licensed physician’s refusal or failure to” take part in ending the life of a patient in any way. The settlement required the state to pay a sum of \$300,000 for attorney’s fees and post the order on the Medical Board of California’s website. “Our clients seek to live out their faith in their medical practice, and that includes valuing every human life entrusted to their care. Participating in physician-assisted suicide very clearly would violate their consciences,” said ADF Senior Counsel Kevin Theriot. “This is a significant victory for religious and conscientious physicians in California. The government can’t force any health care professional to act against his faith or medical ethics.” Read more [here](#).

Hume Christian Camps Wins Massachusetts Zoning Case – The Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court has ruled that a religious exemption applies to the RV park for staff and volunteers on Hume’s New England campground, which will help strengthen attendance. “With this ruling and the subsequent housing, we are better positioned to provide life-changing programs and experiences for campers and families in the years to come,” said Dr. John Boal, Hume Christian Camps executive director. Read more [here](#).

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