



Biblical Citizenship Briefing

August 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

Legislature Races to the Finish – By September 1, all bills that passed their first house and relevant committees in their second will be on the floor of their second house. Some bills are through to the floor already, making this an important time to contact your assembly member or state senator with your views (Find your state legislators [here](#)). You will find the current status of many bills relating to life, faith and family issues 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.) You may also look up any California legislation or search by keyword at leginfo.legislature.ca.gov. The 2023 session concludes September 14, at which time all bills that have successfully passed both houses will move to the governor's desk.

Bill Seeks to Reduce Local Control – Public school boards generally have a responsibility to students, parents, and taxpayers in their local districts to govern with guidance from their communities within state guidelines. This allows for decisions regarding curricula, books, and materials by a majority vote of the elected board members. [AB 1078](#) (Corey Jackson, D-Moreno Valley) sets up procedures for insufficient textbooks and materials and prohibits the governing board of a school district or a county board of education from barring the use of an existing textbook, other instructional material, or curriculum that contains “inclusive and diverse perspectives.” The bill also increases the voting threshold to make textbook and curriculum changes from a majority to a two-thirds super-majority, reducing local control. The bill also requires monitoring of local school districts compliance with antidiscrimination policies by the CA Dept. of Education.

AB 1078 is a response to the conservative majority of Temecula Valley Unified School Board's [decision](#) not to use a particular social studies textbook and ancillary materials that included lessons on assassinated homosexual rights leader Harvey Milk. Gov. Newsom joined the controversy in July and [signaled](#) that the state would provide the textbooks in question, charge the district, and levy a \$1.5 million fine. In the end, the board partially reversed its decision, approving the curriculum, but voting to rewrite a fourth grade module that dealt with civil rights, rather than create the financial burden for the district. Read more [here](#).

In a [press release](#) for AB 1078, Jackson declared in his rationale for the bill, “It is disheartening to witness the rise of white Christian nationalist extremism, which seeks to erase the invaluable contributions and narratives of marginalized communities.” Having [passed](#) the full Assembly and the Senate Education Committee, AB 1078 is now in the Assembly Appropriations suspense file to be reviewed in coming days. Sen. Rosilicie Ochoa Bogh (R-Redlands) stated at the recent Education Comm. hearing, “I’m extremely concerned that this bill will further divide our state. We have so many parents leaving the state of California, taking their children with them, because they believe the state of California does not reflect and respect their values ... and education is right at the top.” Consider sharing your views on AB 1078 with your state senator. Read more [here](#) and [here](#).

All-Trimester Abortion Clinic Opening Thwarted – While state law currently prohibits abortions after viability (generally about 24 weeks) unless the mother's life or “health” is in danger, Proposition 1, passed by California voters last year, calls this into question, declaring that an individual has a “fundamental right to choose to have an abortion” with no mention of viability. The DuPont Clinic, a D.C. abortion provider which specializes in [abortions up to 31 weeks and six days](#) and requires no reason for the late abortion, planned to open a clinic in Beverly Hills this summer. DuPont is one of just three clinics in the country that provide abortions after 28 weeks, and it advertises a [spa-like experience](#). After DuPont spent millions to make improvements to the medical facility, pro-life protestors attended city council meetings putting pressure on the city to challenge the opening on the basis that the clinic was not in compliance with state law. A large pro-life protest outside the clinic on July 29 included worship and prayer to create awareness in hopes of closing the facility. The work of Survivors of the Abortion Holocaust, a pro-life youth organization, and others was successful. Ultimately, the building's owner [rescinded the lease](#) and the clinic will not open September 1 as planned. Litigation has ensued for breach of lease. A doctor who would have worked at the clinic said she still hopes to open a clinic in the Los Angeles area that provides third trimester abortions. Read more [here](#) and [here](#).

New Parent-Friendly Policies under Attack – In our [May issue](#), we covered the [lawsuit](#) by two teachers who are suing the Escondido Union School District because district policy requires them to withhold information from parents about their own children's desire to identify as a gender other than this biological one. Conservative parents and school boards across the state are now considering adopting more parent-friendly policies. Last month, Chino Valley Unified School District (CVUSD) adopted a [parental rights policy](#) that includes a requirement that a student's parents be notified within three days if their child begins identifying as LGBTQ or asks to be referred by a different name or gender than their biological sex or gender on their official records. On the evening the CVUSD board met to vote on the policy, scores of parents and other interested parties spoke out on both sides. After four hours of testimony and discussion, the board voted 4-1 to adopt the policy.

Now, Attorney General Rob Bonta has [launched an investigation](#) to determine if the policy adopted by CVUSD and several other school boards, including Temecula Valley Unified and Murietta Valley Unified, violates students' rights. Shaw responded by stating, "This is a ploy to try to scare all the other boards across California from adopting the policy. I won't back down and will stand in the gap to protect our kids from big government bullies." The board president, her family and even her pets have been the target of death threats, leading to one woman's [arrest](#). Read more [here](#).

In the Courts

Illinois University Settles Speech Case by Christian Student – Three students at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville claimed "harassment" and "discrimination" when Maggie DeJong, a former arts therapy student, posted religious and conservative political messages on her personal Instagram account. In response, the school prohibited her from having "any contact" or "indirect communication" with those students. In May 2022, Alliance Defending Freedom (ADF) [filed suit](#) on DeJong's behalf claiming her right to free speech had been violated. In late July, the university settled outside court, paying DeJong \$80,000, and requiring several professors to undergo First Amendment training. Read more [here](#).

Coach Fired for Declaring Biological Truth – In another free speech case, a snowboarding coach at Vermont's Woodstock Union High School, David Bloch, was waiting in a lodge for the start of competition when he joined a conversation with two of his athletes for approximately three minutes. They were discussing the fact that the opposing team had a male who identified as female on the team. Bloch, a Roman Catholic, respectfully shared his view that biologically, males and females have different DNA and different physical characteristics that give males a competitive advantage over females. The student who identifies as transgender was not present. The next day, the district superintendent fired Bloch for violating the district's Harassment, Hazing, and Bullying policy and another related policy by the Vermont Principals' Association.

ADF filed [Bloch v. Bouchey](#) on Bloch's behalf against the district superintendent, school board and two Vermont state officials in the U.S. District Court for the District of Vermont. ADF Legal Counsel Mathew Hoffmann stated, "The First Amendment ensures Dave, and every other American, can freely express his views on a matter of profound public concern without government punishment. We urge the court to swiftly rule that officials must reinstate Dave as snowboarding coach and that district and Vermont officials cannot enforce unconstitutional 'harassment' policies against public employees." Read more [here](#).

Appeals Court Upholds Safety Restrictions on Abortion Pill – Earlier this month, the 5th Circuit Court of Appeals [upheld](#) a federal district court ruling in *Alliance for Hippocratic Medicine v. U.S. Food and Drug Administration* requiring the FDA to restore safeguards for mifepristone, the first of the two drugs in the chemical abortion process. Restrictions concerning gestational age, number of doctor visits, and others had been loosened in 2016. The court also barred the pills from being sent through the mail, which the FDA had approved in 2021. The ruling states, "In loosening mifepristone's safety restrictions, FDA failed to address several important concerns about whether the drug would be safe for the women who use it. It failed to consider the cumulative effect of removing several important safeguards at the same time ... [a]nd it failed to gather evidence that affirmatively showed that mifepristone could be used safely without being prescribed and dispensed in person."

ADF Senior Counsel Erin Hawley, vice president of the ADF Center for Life and Regulatory Practice said, "The FDA will finally be made to account for the damage it has caused to the health of countless women and girls and the rule of law by unlawfully removing every meaningful safeguard from the chemical abortion drug regimen." For now, however, nothing will change until after the U.S. Supreme Court rules on the case, which the Justice Department has indicated it will appeal. Read more [here](#).

In the News

Operation Cross Country XIII Recovers Trafficking Victims – In a two-week nationwide operation in July, the FBI, in partnership with the [National Center for Missing and Exploited Children](#) (NCMEC), state and local partners, located 200 victims of sex trafficking, including 59 minor victims of child sex trafficking or exploitation, and an additional 59 actively missing children. The collaborative effort led to the identification or arrest of 126 child sexual exploitation and trafficking offense suspects, as well as the identification or arrest of 68 suspected sex traffickers. "Behind every statistic, there is a person with dreams, aspirations, and the right to live a life free from child sex trafficking and exploitation. As a society we must work together to ensure the protection, support, and empowerment of those impacted by this heinous crime," said NCMEC President and CEO Michelle DeLaune. Read more [here](#) and [here](#).

Pray – Father, please expose the darkness of sex trafficking so that victims may be freed, and criminals brought to justice. Please help parents protect their children from exploitation and give us all eyes to see how we can help. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Trafficking Awareness Seminar Coming Soon – Please mark your calendars for a special seminar on October 25 from 6:30-8:00 pm in the EFCC Chapel. Learn how to protect your kids, spot victims of sex trafficking, and what you can do to make a difference. More information to come.

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