



Biblical Citizenship Briefing

April 2024

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

Policy Committee Deadline Approaches – With policy committee hearings happening almost daily, the State Capitol has been a busy place this month. By May 3, all bills must have passed the policy committee(s) in their house of origin. After that, fiscal bills will await a hearing in the Appropriations Committee and other bills will move directly to the floor of their first house, with some ready for floor votes now. You may check on the status of any bill that interests you at leginfo.legislature.ca.gov. Click on “Bill Information” and search by bill number, topic, or author. You may also see a list of many bills relating to life, faith, education, and family at judeochristiancaucus.com/bills-and-resolutions or at California Family Council’s watch list [here](#). Let your state senator or assembly member know your views on bills that interest you. Find your representatives at findyourrep.legislature.ca.gov. (Referrals are for informational purposes only, does not imply an endorsement by EFCC of the opinions, positions, or contents of the site.)

Public Safety Committee Hijacks Bill to Protect Minors – Sen. Shannon Grove (R-Bakersfield) presented [SB 1414](#) to the [Senate Public Safety Committee](#) on April 16. The bill was intended to make soliciting or engaging in commercial sex with a minor a felony whether or not the buyer knew the victim was under 18 (It’s currently just a misdemeanor with minimal punishment.). Many past victims were at the hearing to offer their support for the bill, but Sens. Aisha Wahab (D-Fremont), Scott Wiener (D-San Francisco), and Nancy Skinner (D-Oakland) forced amendments onto the bill, which Sen. Grove rejected, then passed it to the Appropriations Comm. in watered-down form. After the hostile amendments, SB 1414 will not apply to victims who are 16 or 17, the buyer must have known the victim was a minor, and the first offense will be a “wobbler,” meaning it could be charged as a misdemeanor or a felony.

Following the hearing, Sen. Grove stated, “I’m incredibly disappointed that not only did my colleagues reject my proposal to make the buying of children for sex a prison felony, but that I was blindsided when they amended my bill without my consent. Children of all ages deserve to be protected under the law and a simple fine after buying a child for sex is not an appropriate punishment. Californians across the state have made their voices heard and they want this law changed. Unfortunately, the members of the Public Safety Committee continue their soft on crime approach at the expense of California’s most vulnerable, our children.” There is a glimmer of hope for the bill, however. Gov. Newsom’s office has been signaling that he wants SB 1414 to reach his desk, and that there is “work to do” on the amendments. Read more [here](#) and [here](#). Watch Santa Barbara County Deputy District Attorney Tyson McCoy share his experience with victims of this heinous crime [here](#). You may view the Public Safety hearing [here](#). Consider asking the Appropriations Comm., which will consider SB 1414 soon, to address the recent amendments and return the bill to its original intent. Phone numbers for the committee members are listed [here](#).

Two weeks earlier, the same committee killed [SB 1219](#), authored by Sen. Kelly Seyarto (R-Murrieta). That bill would have repealed the law that decriminalized loitering for prostitution, but because Sen. Seyarto, who sits on the committee, could not procedurally move his own bill, the measure died when no other members would make the motion to proceed to a vote. ([More](#).)

Assisted Suicide Bill Dies before First Hearing – [SB 1196](#) (Catherine Blakespear, D-Encinitas) would have expanded California’s “End of Life Option Act,” which some 3,000 Californians have used to end their own lives since its passage in 2015. [A Better Exit](#) sponsored SB 1196, which would have allowed anyone over 18 (not just Californians) with a “grievous and irremediable medical condition” (including dementia) to end their lives without the terminal diagnosis and just six months to live, as the current law requires. After encountering opposition from both sides of the political aisle, the senator amended the bill to add back the residency requirement and make other minor changes, but it wasn’t enough to garner sufficient support, and she pulled her bill from consideration before its first hearing. Read more [here](#).

Lawmakers United in Protecting Children Online – A new bill, [AB 3080](#) (Juan Alanis, R-Merced), will help protect children and teens from “adult” products and websites by requiring age verification prior to access to material deemed harmful to minors. Such methods can include government-issued identification, credit cards, bank accounts, etc. Pornographic material, easily obtained by children, with average first age of exposure at 11 years, objectifies and denigrates women, and has become increasingly violent. This trend is being acted out by young men, causing serious harm to their partners. (Read more [here](#) from the *Federalist*, but be warned that the article is graphic in nature.) A growing number of states have passed similar age verification legislation, and AB 3080 cleared its first hurdle by passing the [Privacy and Consumer Protection Comm.](#) unanimously on April 16. The bill now moves to the [Assembly Judiciary Comm.](#) where it will be heard April 30. Consider sharing your views by calling the committee members and your assembly member.

Emergency Rooms to Provide Abortions – With the goal of making abortions even more available, Assemblywoman Cottie Petrie-Norris (D-Irvine) has authored [AB 2490](#), the Reproductive Health Emergency Preparedness Plan. The author has asked

for \$4 million in taxpayer funds to provide grants to hospitals that agree to train staff to perform medical and surgical abortions in their busy emergency departments. In its opposition letter to the Health Comm, California Catholic Conference stated, “Abortion is already free and ubiquitous in California - performed by doctors, nurse practitioners, midwives, and physician assistants, at 400 facilities, on college campuses, and via telehealth and a dozen sources by mail. Pushing unwanted abortion on our communities is exploitative and is reproductive coercion.” AB 2490 has [passed](#) the Assembly Health Comm. and is now in the Appropriations Comm. where it will be heard after the state budget is approved.

In the News

“Gender-Affirming” Care: Help or Harm – As countries in Europe begin to steer away from treating gender incongruence or dysphoria with experimental puberty blockers, hormones, and mutilating surgeries, the U.S. forges ahead into an unknown future for these children, with the exception of a few states applying the brakes. The gender reassignment movement has largely been based on the World Professional Association for Transgender Health (WPATH), which has been held up as the leading scientific and medical organization devoted to transgender healthcare. However, a recent [exposé](#) contends that this “causes harm without justification, and its victims are some of society’s most vulnerable people. Their injuries are painful and life-altering.” While there has been an assertion that puberty blockers are fully reversible, [Breakpoint reports](#) that “in a [video](#) recently leaked from WPATH’s September 2022 certification seminar, the truth comes out. According to WPATH-certified pediatric endocrinologist Dr. Daniel Metzger, puberty-blocking drugs aren’t as reversible or noninvasive as advocates claim. In fact, they interrupt teens’ physical development in ways that cannot be reversed.” Metzger also admits that the effects of these drugs on the adolescent brain are not fully known. Going the next step into cross-sex hormones begins a lifelong dependency to pharmaceuticals, and one that [Planned Parenthood](#) has embraced as a new line of business.

A growing chorus of teen and young adults who underwent blockers, hormones and, in many cases, surgeries regret their decision to attempt to change their gender. Click [here](#) to view the short documentary DeTrans about the experiences of some of these young people. Pray for them and for others who are confused and seeking help for this mental health issue. Pray for parents who desire the best for their children to find guidance toward the truth in the midst of a bewildering situation. The overwhelming number of children (some 80%) suffering from gender incongruence revert to contentment with their sex once through puberty.

When stepping into this controversial issue (and others), there is a decision to make in whether speak the truth (in a loving way, of course) or take the road of tolerance. John Stonestreet says, “The temptation to reduce love to only those actions and words that steer clear of offense is, like all lies, rooted in a half truth.” Read his insights [here](#).

Remember: There’s Still Time to Protect Kids – The ProtectKidsCA initiative is now focusing on the 2026 General Election ballot. This allows an extension of the signature deadline to early May. The goal is three-fold: require parental notification from school regarding mental health and gender identification issues, protect girls’ competitive sports and school spaces, and prevent child sterilization by prohibiting the use of puberty blockers, cross-sex hormones, mastectomies, and genital surgeries for minors. If you wish to participate in this important effort, find out more and download petitions at [ProtectKidsCA.com](#). Contact us if you have questions on the signature gathering process. **Petitions should be mailed to arrive no later than May 15.**

Ready for a little happiness? – It’s been on the decline, particularly since 2000 – and so has marriage (of course its decline began even earlier). Is there a correlation? A [recent study](#) from the University of Chicago found that “being married is the most important differentiator with a 30-percentage point happy-unhappy gap over the unmarried,” more so than other factors such as income, education or geographical location. Interestingly, conservatives scored higher in happiness than liberals. Read a summary and other insights by at the Colson Center [Breakpoint](#) here.

National Day of Prayer – Thursday, May 2, 2024

Please join in prayer with millions of Americans on Thursday, May 2 as we observe the National Day of Prayer. This year’s theme is **LIFT UP THE WORD – LIGHT UP THE WORLD** and the verse is 2 Samuel 22:29-31:

For you are my lamp, O Lord, and my God lightens my darkness. For by You I can run against a troop, and by my God I can leap over a wall. This God—his way is perfect; the word of the Lord proves true; He is a shield for all those who take refuge in Him.

Father, thank You for providing wisdom to meet the challenges of today’s culture through Your Word. We can rely on its truth to guide our lives. Be our light in the darkening world, Lord, and shield us, our families, our communities, and our nation from the evil one. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Find out more at [nationaldayofprayer.org](#).

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