



Biblical Citizenship Briefing

August 2026

This briefing is strictly for your information. It is a summary of current public policy issues, including pending legislation, that involve moral and biblical principles. While suggested action may be included, no specific position by EFCC is implied. Find contact and subscription information at the end of this document. (Referrals and links to websites are for informational purposes only, and do not imply an endorsement by EFCC of the opinions, positions, or contents of the site.)

In California

Approaching the Finish Line – The California Legislature will adjourn August 31, sending all bills that have passed both houses to Governor Newsom. He will then have 30 days to sign them, veto them, or let them become law without his signature.

This is an important time to let your legislators know your views on measures important to you. Remember, bills are in their second state house now. An assembly bill (AB) is now in the Senate, so you would contact your state senator; contact your assembly member for Senate bills (SB). California Family Council has a bill watch list [here](#) to use in contacting your legislators directly, and they make it easy to share your views on many bills using the CFC [Action Center](#). Find your California state legislators at findyourrep.legislature.ca.gov. Search by topic or bill number at leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/home.xhtml

Bill Threatening Counselors Amended – While many very concerning bills moved out of the Appropriations Committees and to the full house floors, some 27% were held in these fiscal committees and are now dead. Others, like [SB 934](#) (Scott Wiener, D-San Francisco), were amended before being sent to the floor. This bill would have originally allowed former patients to seek damages from counselors for therapy provided relating to sexual attraction and gender dysphoria up to 22 years after a minor became 18. In some good news, the bill was amended to remove that retroactive civil liability. What remains in SB 934 is an update to the definitions of sexual orientation and gender identity change efforts to add that the definition applies regardless of the direction of the intended change. Further, the bill adds “gender identity” to the prohibition that “*a mental health provider may not engage in sexual orientation or gender identity change efforts with a patient under 18 years of age under any circumstances.*” So, counselors would not be able to address gender identity issues unless they were affirming the desired identity of the minor. Under current law any attempts to help provide therapy to minors with undesired sexual orientation are considered unprofessional conduct subject to discipline by their licensing entity. SB 934 will extend this penalty to gender identity issues as well. Let your assembly member and state senator know your views.

Earlier this year, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in [Chiles v. Salazar](#) that counseling conversations are protected speech, so it’s unclear if the California law may face challenges. See below for a similar case in Washington state that provides hope for counseling freedom.

Muslim Holy Days May Become State Holidays – Last year, the Hindu holiday Diwali was added to the list of state holidays with the passage of [AB 268](#). This year, a bill to add the Islamic holy days “Eid al-Fitr” (marking the end of Ramadan) and “Eid al-Adha” (the culmination of the Hajj pilgrimage to Mecca) to that list is nearing its final votes. [AB 2017](#) (Matt Haney, D-San Francisco) will authorize closures for K-12 schools and community colleges, and permit state employees to exchange their personal holiday credit for time off during these observances. School closures would have to be approved by local governing boards. But the bill goes further. It states, “educational institutions throughout this state may include exercises, funded through existing resources” and that the “State Board of Education may adopt a model curriculum guide to be available for use by public schools for exercises related to Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha.” Share your views on this bill with both your state senator and assembly member, as AB 2017 was amended in the Senate and will have to return to the Assembly for a concurrence vote. Read more [here](#).

Safe Surrender Expansion Moves to Senate Floor – Moving through the legislative process with bipartisan support, [AB 1628](#) (Michelle Rodriguez, D-Chino) will increase the timeframe during which a new mother may surrender her newborn without the threat of prosecution for child abandonment. Current law allows a parent or individual with custody of an infant to surrender custody of the child at a safe surrender site up to 72 hours after birth, but AB 1628 increases that time to 30 days, better protecting vulnerable newborns. Communicate your support for this life-protecting bill with your state senator.

In the Courts

Washington Officials Will Not Censor Counselor – Brian Tingley has been a licensed marriage and family therapist in the State of Washington for more than 20 years. His state, like ours, has a law prohibiting counselors from helping minors with gender-related issues find comfort with their biological sex or reduce unwanted same-sex attractions. Violations bring a fine of \$5,000 and potential loss of a counselor’s license. Because Tingley’s patients desire such counseling consistent with their moral and religious beliefs, he challenged the law in 2021 on the basis that it violated his freedom of speech and his faith as well as that of his clients. A district court threw out his challenge, *Tingley v. Brown*, and his attorneys at Alliance Defending Freedom (ADF) [appealed](#) to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit which affirmed the lower court ruling. ADF then [petitioned](#) the U.S. Supreme Court. The high court declined to hear the case in 2023, but the story did not end there.

After the March 2026 high court ruling in [Chiles v. Salazar](#) that held counseling conversations are protected speech, Tingley felt vindicated. ADF reopened his case in the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Washington and, on August

13, the state [agreed](#) not to enforce the law against Tingley pending the district court's final judgment. "There is an epidemic of mental health issues among young people today. They and their parents often come to Brian Tingley because they feel most comfortable with a counselor who shares their faith, yet the state prohibited these voluntary conversations," said ADF Senior Counsel Johannes Widmalm-Delphonse. "We're pleased Washington has agreed that Mr. Tingley should be free to speak. It will allow young people to get the help they desperately need while his case proceeds." Read more [here](#).

The preliminary injunction provides hope not only for Tingley and other counselors in his state, but in our state as well.

Pray that the Washington district court will rule in Tingley's favor and permanently enjoin the Washington law. Ask that this case and *Chiles* will cause other states, including ours, to allow counselors to treat their clients with a guaranteed freedom to speak the truth and help bring healing and wholeness for the hurting and confused.

Students Sue UC Schools for Constitutional Rights Violations – The law firm Defending Education has filed a [lawsuit](#) on behalf of four students at UCLA, UC Irvine and UC San Diego against the Regents, the UC president, other campus officials, and state leaders including Gov. Newsom. In seeking to address "sexual harassment," the University of California has adopted a "Sexual Violence and Harassment" Policy that prohibits speech in addition to physical conduct. The lawsuit indicates "sex-based conduct includes acts of verbal ... intimidation[n] or hostility based on gender, gender identity, gender expression, sex- or gender-stereotyping, or sexual orientation." And it "covers derogatory names or slurs," "offensive terms," and "jokes," citing an example that a student believing that someone should not "use a particular bathroom that does not correspond to their gender identity" could be punished under the Hostile-Environment Provision.

California Family Council states, "There is no time limit on reporting a violation. A student could report a classmate a year later for something said in a study group. Faculty and staff are required to report suspected violations even if they never witnessed them. And the mandatory training every UC student must complete to register for classes tells students flatly that a student who continues calling a transgender classmate by her birth name and biologically accurate pronouns has created a 'hostile environment.' No option on the quiz to say otherwise," Greg Burt, Vice President of California Family Council, said. "These students deserve real credit. UC has left them with only two options: repeat a lie about who they are or say nothing at all. Choosing silence over dishonesty isn't the same as standing up and speaking the truth, but no student should be forced into that choice in the first place. We are teaching an entire generation that the safest way to get a degree is to keep the truth to yourself. That is not education. That is training in cowardice, and it should alarm every parent in this state." Read more [here](#) and [here](#).

Texas Children's Hospital Settlement Sets Precedent – Clinics providing gender-rejecting care have proliferated across the country, with many now closing or shifting away from the practice of providing puberty blockers, cross-sex hormones and mutilating surgeries. These include San Diego's Rady Children's Hospital, which has reportedly halted its gender services, and Kaiser that has ceased providing surgeries, but still offers other services. At Texas Children's Hospital, whistleblowers came forward and exposed the "gender transition" procedures being provided to minors and adults, resulting in an historic [settlement](#). Terms include a combined total of \$10,000,000 in penalties and restitution, the permanent and irrevocable termination of privileges for multiple physicians who performed gender-transition interventions on children, and the creation of a Detransition Clinic. According to the Burke Law Group that handled the case, *United States ex rel. Doe v. Texas Children's Hospital, et al.*, the clinic will be "the first of its kind in the entire country, which must open by the end of October 2026. The clinic will deliver multidisciplinary detransition-related medical care to patients up to and including the age of 21 who underwent sex-rejecting 'gender-transition' procedures." Read more [here](#).

Project Veritas has posted videos of providers at various gender clinics, a detransition patient, and an explanation of how puberty blockers work on its website [here](#) (Warning – video includes graphic descriptions).

In the News

Comic Con Sting Nets Dozens of Buyers – The annual comic book and multi-genre entertainment event that is San Diego's Comic Con draws more than the fantastic characters and superheroes we see on the local news. Sadly, like other large conventions and sporting events, it also brings sex buyers, contributing to San Diego's already significant sex trafficking problem. The good news is the San Diego Human Trafficking Task Force is a model for other jurisdictions, and over the July 22 to 24 weekend 27 sex buyers were arrested for solicitation, loitering for the purpose of solicitation and other related crimes.

"Operation Iron Justice focused on those who were buying human beings for sex as if they are products for sale," said San Diego County District Attorney Summer Stephan. "The message we sent was loud and clear that human beings are not for sale and that anyone who engages in the crime of buying a person for sex will be held accountable ... purchasing sex is not a victimless crime, it drives an illicit industry that generates more than \$810 million a year in San Diego County and profits from exploitation of children and adults ... By holding buyers accountable, we reduce demand, deter future crimes, and help protect victims." Read more [here](#).

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) ; www.efcc.org/biblical-citizens