

City Denies Funding to Honor Pastor Frederick K.C. Price

Los Angeles officials recently decided to name an intersection after prominent pastor Fred Price, but then they refused to pick up the tab for the ceremony because of his stance against same-sex marriage.

City Councilman Bill Rosendahl, who is openly gay, pressed his colleagues July 22 not to waive the fees for the official dedication of "Dr. Frederick K.C. Price Square" after he was alerted to Price's views on homosexuality, The Los Angeles Times reported.

"I'll vote against this ... to show that homophobia will not be supported by the city of Los Angeles," said Rosendahl, who took office earlier in July.

Price, 73, leads 21,000-member Crenshaw Christian Center and has been in ministry for more than 50 years. He is a major spokesperson for the Word-Faith movement. In February, the Traditional Values Coalition (TVC) and Price hosted a summit at Crenshaw Christian Center on the dangers of homosexual marriage.

The 70 black pastors who attended were urged to pressure lawmakers to oppose gay marriage. Price took a key leadership role in encouraging pastors to actively defend marriage from criticism by gay activists, TVC said.

The council was expected to sign off on waiving the city's

\$1,000 cost for the dedication ceremony, which was held July 23. But Rosendahl heard from a gay activist that Price is despised in some circles for his views on homosexuality.

Councilman Bernard Parks, who initiated renaming the intersection after Price in May, defended the decision to honor the pastor. "I don't know of many pastors in the ... district that I represent that do support gay marriage," Parks told the newspaper. "It's not like he's alone."

The street-renaming ceremony was part of a weeklong celebration honoring Price's many years in ministry and the 15th year of the founding of the Fellowship of Inner City Word of Faith Ministries. Los Angeles County officials declared Sunday, July 24 "Frederick K.C. Price Day."

Gay marriage has been hotly debated in California since 2004 when San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsome began issuing marriage licenses to same-sex couples. Though the state Supreme Court determined that Newsome overstepped his authority, several groups have challenged the constitutionality of California's marriage law, claiming it violates the constitution's equal protection clause. California lawmakers also have made several attempts to pass a gay marriage bill.

In response, has initiated a petition drive that would allow voters to decide during the 2006 election whether the state constitution should be amended to permit only traditional marriage. In 2000, California voters passed Proposition 22, which amended a state statute to prohibit gay marriage. Observers say only a marriage amendment will prevent challenges to the statute's constitutionality. Marriage amendments have passed in all 18 states that put the issue before voters.

Eric Tiansay