

California Lawmaker Drops Anti-Biblical Bill

California's controversial AB 2943 has been withdrawn by its author, Assembly member Evan Low.

Assembly Bill 2943 would have made it illegal to sell any service intended to change an individual's sexuality or gender identity.

"I knew this was an emotionally charged issue, so I spent the past few months traveling up and down the state meeting with a wide variety of faith leaders," Low said in a statement released on his website. "I was heartened by the conversations."

Luis Javier Ruiz, a survivor of the Pulse nightclub shooting in Orlando in June 2016 and a former member of the LGBT community, has served as a staunch opponent of AB2943 in recent months.

"This allows people to become aware that change is possible," says Ruiz, now a spirit-filled Christian. "All the false narratives about conversion therapy camps and their horror stories are not who we are. For me, nothing was forced. I can speak for many that it was a love story. It has allowed our voices to be heard and prayers to be answered. It's time to come out of silence for what we believe in. We know that the battle is already won."

"I just want to thank Evan Low. We are praying for him and we know how big of an impact this will have and the backlash he might get. We want him to know that we are by his side on this."

Bethel Church in Redding, California, released this statement, praising Low for his change of heart:

"We are grateful for Assemblyman Low's courage and humility in his willingness to dialogue with California pastors and once-gay people these past months. He took time to hear how AB2943 would impact people of faith and particularly once-gay people, and has shown commitment to creating opportunities for further dialogue."

After meeting personally with pastors, professional counselors, and former homosexuals who lead ministries to others in the LGBT community, Low decided to continue the dialogue beyond this legislative session.

"With a hopeful eye toward the future, I share with you that, despite the support the bill received in the Assembly and Senate, I will not be sending AB 2943 to the governor this year," the statement on Low's website said.

Some, including Uprooted Heart Inc. CEO MJ Nixon, said they will diligently pray for Low for his bravery to change his views.

"This is why we can not be silent," says MJ Nixon, CEO of Uprooted Heart Inc. "God has freed us to share what only Jesus can do to change a heart and transform a life. We will continue to pray for Assemblyman Evan Low and many on his side to see the truth that we are on the side of love for our fellow brother. God is sovereign and today is a day to celebrate great victory for the Kingdom. All the glory is His alone for this change of heart."

Mr. Low's decision was also greeted with relief and gratitude by Jonathan Keller, president of **California Family Council**.

"People of faith across California and around the nation care deeply about our family, friends, neighbors and coworkers who identify as LGBTQ," Keller says. "AB 2943 would have tragically limited our ability to offer compassionate support related to sexual orientation and gender identity, and even to preach Jesus' message of unconditional love and life

transformation.”

Keller went on to thank Assembly member Low for his unprecedented outreach to the faith community in response to the threat AB 2943 posed to their constitutionally protected First Amendment freedoms.

“We are inexpressibly grateful to Assembly member Low for meeting personally with faith leaders over the last several months and sincerely listening to our concerns,” Keller says. “Today is also a testament to the courageous counselors, ministry leaders, pastors and once-gay individuals who bravely shared their personal stories, ensuring that these vital perspectives were not overlooked in the legislative process.”

Former members of the LGBT community have planned a “Freedom March” to share their life-transforming testimonies on Nov. 4 in Los Angeles in Pershing Square. Freedom March Founder and former transgender Jeffrey McCall sees today’s turn of events as a victory for the rights of California citizens.

“I am very excited today to find out the people of California will have the options to deal with sexuality questions from a Christian perspective,” McCall said. “Free speech has won today. I questioned my gender dysphoria diagnosis myself. I also questioned my homosexual feelings. I was even suicidal at one point. Through Revelation of Jesus, I have found hope and peace.” {eo}