

Ministry Cancels Student Conference in Wake of Sexual Identity Bill

Summit Ministries President Dr. Jeff Myers announced the cancellation of the organization's scheduled student conferences Tuesday after the California State Assembly passed a proposed bill that legal analysts are calling an effort to limit free speech and the free exercise of religion.

The ministry canceled two conferences scheduled at Biola University this summer.

"When I heard about the California Assembly bill AB2943, I thought, 'So this is the kind of trick leftists pull when they have a veto-proof majority in a state legislature,'" Myers said in a press release. "But when AB2943 actually passed the California House, I got chills."

The proposed measure includes a prohibition on "efforts to change behaviors or gender expressions, or to eliminate or reduce sexual or romantic attractions or feelings toward individuals of the same sex."

Calling the bill "the most blatant chilling of free speech in America in my lifetime," Myers said he thinks the bill will ultimately pass in the state Senate and will be signed by Gov. Jerry Brown.

"Bottom line: AB2943 is a dog whistle to the left that Christians holding traditional views are fair game for discrimination, smears and frivolous lawsuits. It denies constitutional protection to those who hold traditional views of sexuality and marriage," the release noted. "With this legislation looming, I decided to suspend our California conference and arrange for registrants to join us at one of

our other locations. Summit will not bend God's truth to accommodate the state of California. Nor can we put our students, staff and faculty at risk."

"Fortunately, we are still free to present our conferences in 49 states—and that's exactly what we're going to do," Myers explained in the press release.

Myers also had a warning for a rest of the country.

"Do not be fooled. This insanity is coming to every state: Iowa, Arizona, Florida—all of them. We must be on guard and work toward restoring common-sense governance," he said.

According to the California Family Council, some legal experts have concluded the bill targets the ability of religious non-profits, churches and pastors from teaching and practicing their faith regarding sexual orientation and gender.

The bill would also ban books from being sold in California that tells people to trust in the power of Jesus Christ and His gospel to help them change their same-sex attraction or gender dysphoria, according to the Alliance Defending Freedom (ADF).

"California AB 2943 makes it unlawful for any person to sell books, counseling services or anything else that helps someone overcome unwanted same-sex attraction or gender identity confusion," said ADF Attorney Matt Sharp. "As a result, it could be a violation if a pastor encourages a congregant to visit the church bookstore to purchase books that help people address sexual issues, perhaps including the Bible itself, which teaches about the importance of sexual purity within the confines of marriage between a man and woman."

Read the ADF legal analysis of the bill. {[eo](#)}

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