

New Law a Major Victory for Pastors Who Refuse to Compromise the Bible

Thursday, March 10, Florida Gov. Rick Scott signed House Bill 43, also known as the Pastor Protection Act, into law.

The bill, drafted by state Rep. Scott Plakon (R-Longwood) before the U.S. Supreme Court issued its *Obergefell v. Hodges* opinion last summer, protects clergy, churches and religious organizations and their employees from civil action for refusing to perform same-sex marriages. Plakon said he crafted the bill based on similar legislation passed into law in Texas.

The law provides that churches or religious organizations, related organizations or certain individuals may not be required to solemnize any marriage or provide services, accommodations, facilities, goods or privileges for related purposes if such action would violate sincerely held religious beliefs. Mat Staver, founder and chairman of Liberty Counsel, recently spoke at a rally in Tallahassee advocating for the bill, when the Florida House of Representatives was considering its legislation.

"I am pleased that the Pastor Protection Act is now law in Florida," he said at the time. "However, more protections are needed beyond just pastors and churches performing weddings. We should pass broad legislation that protects the religious freedom and conscience of all people who refuse to be conscripted into service of the so-called LGBT agenda.

"This assault on marriage is really an attempt to obliterate Judeo-Christian morality, to destroy marriage and family, and is an attack on God, who created male and female."