

If Religious Freedom Is Erased, Then What?

Senate Democrats have a trick up their sleeve to ram the so-called Equality Act down the throats of every American, removing religious freedom from every aspect of our lives. But we have a plan to stop them.

The threat of the grossly misnamed Equality Act—which erases all claims to religious freedom under the federal Religious Freedom Restoration Act—just got closer to passing over the weekend.

The House sent the budget bill to the Senate early Saturday morning. The budget is one of those bills in the Senate that only needs a majority vote. Knowing there are not the 60 votes required under the filibuster rule, Democrats hope to attach the Equality Act to the budget, thus bypassing the 60-vote requirement.

Thankfully, this sneak attack can be blocked. If one senator objects to this maneuver, a full vote with the filibuster rule is required. We are working with senators to make sure the floor is covered every minute to object to a voice vote tactic on the part of opportunistic Democrats.

If passed, the Equality Act will reach every corner of our lives. No one will escape its reach. It will impose an extreme LGBTQ and abortion agenda on you!

It is so radical that the bill revokes the Religious Freedom Restoration Act. The federal RFRA was passed in 1993. This bill restored religious freedom in America to the same level of protection it enjoyed prior to the terrible 1990 Supreme Court case that weakened the First Amendment's "Free Exercise of Religion" protections.

RFRA passed unanimously in the House, by a 97-3 margin in the Senate and was signed into law by former President Bill Clinton.

Even the ACLU and Americans for the Separation of Church and State agreed with Christian organizations like Liberty Counsel in supporting RFRA. I don't recall any law that ever enjoyed such widespread support.

Put simply, RFRA ensures that religious freedom is protected as it always was prior to 1990. Until the Supreme Court overturns the 1990 Smith decision, without RFRA, churches, faith-based schools, employers and individuals will lose under the Equality Act because there are no exceptions or accommodations for deeply held religious beliefs.

The Equality Act revokes all aspects of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, leaving people of faith without a defense.

Churches, Christian schools, employers, health care providers, pharmacists—everyone—will be forced to accept both the radical LGBTQ agenda as well as the pro-abortion agenda.

No one will be safe, as no religious exemptions will be allowed.

No school, church, business or person will be allowed to separate boys and girls, or men from women, in housing, sleeping arrangements, locker rooms, showers or sports. On demand, boys must be allowed to use girls' facilities under the outrageous Equality Act.

We can and we must stop the Equality Act.

Because radicals see abortion as a function of "reproductive health care," under the bill's requirements, no health care provider or crisis pregnancy center will be able to refuse to refer, perform or participate in abortion—not a pro-life doctor or nurse, and not a Catholic hospital. Crisis pregnancy

centers will be forced to refer young girls for abortions under this bill.

If the Equality Act passes, there will be no exceptions or exemptions. Compliance will be forced by law. Noncompliant churches, schools and hospitals will lose tax exemption, and colleges and universities will also lose accreditation. This means that students will not be able to get student loans and will have difficulty being accepted into graduate school programs.

But we can beat this dangerous bill. Here's the plan:

- First, we must flood every Senate office with a mountain of faxes and demand they vote no on the misnamed Equality Act.
- Second, Liberty Counsel is working with a group of senators to ensure the Democrats cannot use their “voice vote” trick to slide the Equality Act into the appropriations bill (which only needs a simple majority to pass).

These senators will need to take turns constantly being on the Senate floor every minute the Senate is in session. One objection will force a full vote, which is then subject to the 60-vote filibuster rule.

- Third, we must pray for the Lord's protection against the evil plan to deconstruct gender and make abortion a federal right.

In addition to this critical battle, Liberty Counsel continues to fight for religious freedom in other venues, defending pastors, churches and pro-life heroes like Sandra Merritt.

We have church cases pending right now at the Supreme Court. And we just filed a major brief at the appeals court on behalf of Sandra Merritt against Planned Parenthood. {eo}

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