

Lawmakers Blast Vanderbilt Over 'Hostile' Policy

The Congressional Prayer Caucus is challenging Vanderbilt University over a new school policy they say discriminates against religious student groups.

The school has adopted a measure forcing campus organizations to consider any and all students for leadership positions regardless of their beliefs.

The caucus has sent the school a letter calling the policy "unfair" and "hostile."

In the letter, lawmakers said religious groups deserve an exemption to protect their religious identity. They cited fraternities and sororities, which are exempt from the ban on gender discrimination.

"It's my hope that Chancellor Zeppos and Vanderbilt's board will reconstruct their nondiscrimination policy to reflect the freedom that religious student groups have been provided under federal law," Caucus member Rep. Marsha Blackburn, R-Tenn., told Fox News in a statement.

Vanderbilt officials responded, saying their new policy is not designed to target specific groups.

"Student groups that wish to practice their faith are welcome at Vanderbilt," they said in letter to Fox News. "And we are pleased that 27 religious student groups of diverse faiths have indicated they will comply with our nondiscrimination policy and be registered for (the) next academic year."