

Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals Blocks California's Ban on Change Therapy

The Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals blocked the California ban on sexual orientation change therapy (SB 1172) from going into effect when it granted an injunction pending the appeal in *Pickup v. Brown*.

The law was scheduled to go into effect on Jan. 1, 2013, and would have banned any counseling to minors seeking to diminish or eliminate **unwanted same-sex sexual attractions**, behavior or identity.

"The minors we represent have not and do not want to act on same-sex attractions, nor do they want to engage in such behavior. They are greatly benefiting from counseling. These minors have struggled with same-sex attraction and have been able to reduce or eliminate the stress and conflict in their lives by receiving counseling that best aligns with their religious and moral values," Staver told the court.

"Without this emergency injunction, the State of California would essentially barge into the private therapy rooms of victimized young people and tell them that their confusion caused by the likes of a Jerry Sandusky abuser is normal and they should pursue their unwanted same-sex sexual attractions and behavior," Staver continued.

"This law is politically motivated to interfere with counselors and clients. Liberty Counsel is thankful that the Ninth Circuit blocked the law from going into effect. This law is an astounding overreach by the government into the realm of counseling and would have caused irreparable harm," concluded Staver.

Liberty Counsel filed the lawsuit challenging the new law on Oct. 4 on behalf of several parents and their children who are receiving and benefiting from such counseling; several licensed counselors who provide such counsel; the National Association for Research and Therapy of Homosexuality (NARTH); and the American Association of Christian Counselors (AACC), an organization with about 50,000 professional counseling members. When the federal district judge in California failed to block the law, Liberty Counsel filed an appeal with the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals.