

Unlikely Allies Oppose Biden's Equality Act Attacking Religious Freedom

As President Joe Biden's Equality Act is being pushed through the House to the Senate, evangelical believers are uniting with Catholics and even a liberal law professor to protest its passage into law. Although it says the bill "sounds positive," Intercessors for America reports a few of the concerns as it calls for concerted prayer against passage of the bill:

- Forcing young girls to share bathrooms and locker rooms with those who "identify" as female.*
- Making it illegal "hate speech" to talk about biblical identity as it refers to homosexuality and gender.*
- Strip the rights of Christians to exercise their conscience as it refers to hiring and even paying for abortions.*

But the prayer-based organization is far from alone in its concerns. The Alliance Defending Freedom, dedicated to protecting religious freedom and countering threats against it, say the following about the Equality Act:

If passed, the Equality Act would add "sexual orientation" and "gender identity" to many existing federal non-discrimination laws. This would negatively impact many areas of life including employment, athletics, housing, public and private schools, businesses, and more. These changes violate the religious beliefs of millions of Americans, harm women and girls, and contradict the common good.

Doug Clay, general superintendent of the Assemblies of God (USA) tweeted that the Equality Act "represents the single

greatest threat to religious Liberty in my lifetime,” asking follower to “pray for the defeat of this”:

This Equality Act represents the single greatest threat to religious Liberty in my lifetime. I oppose this bill. Please pray for the defeat of this.

– Doug Clay (@dougclay) February 23, 2021

“It has nothing to do with equality,” Franklin Graham posted on Twitter yesterday, calling the bill a “smokescreen to force Americans to accept the LGBTQ agenda”:

The Equality Act has nothing to do w/ equality. It’s a smokescreen to force Americans to accept the LGBTQ agenda & it creates a lot of INEQUALITY for people of faith. It punishes individuals & organizations that disagree based on their moral convictions.

– Franklin Graham (@Franklin_Graham) February 23, 2021

Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene, R-Ga., who has been open about her Christian beliefs, also tweeted out her opposition to the act, adding that it “virtually destroys women’s rights and religious freedom”:

The #EqualityAct has nothing to do with equality.

It virtually destroys women’s rights and religious freedom.

How can anyone vote for this?

– Marjorie Taylor Greene (@mtgreenee) February 22, 2021

And evangelicals were not alone in reacting against to the bill. Bill Donahue, president of the Catholic League, warned on Monday that the Equality Act would “promote the most comprehensive assault on Christianity ever written into law,”

adding that “It is hard for the public to understand, especially Catholics, why such allegedly ‘devout Catholics’ as Biden and Pelosi would want to champion such patently anti-Christian legislation as the Equality Act.”

Even Douglas Laycock, a liberal law professor at the University of Virginia and a longtime supporter of same-sex marriage, joins conservatives in his opposition to the Equality Act, *National Review* reports. He said in an email that the act “goes very far to stamp out religious exemptions” and “this is is not a good-faith attempt to reconcile competing interests. It is an attempt by one side to grab all the disputed territory and to crush the other side.”

As furor over the bill continued, Amazon made a Sunday decision to pull a controversial bestseller dealing with trans issues, *When Harry Became Sally*, from its website, *Newsweek* reports. Conservatives may see the Equality Act as dangerous, but LGBTQ activists dismiss this book using the same term, also calling it “anti-trans.” Ryan Anderson’s book hit No. 1 on two of Amazon’s lists prior to its release, but it also sparked controversy for some of his claims.

“We need to respect the dignity of people who identify as transgender but without encouraging children to undergo experimental transition treatments, and without trampling on the needs and interests of others,” Anderson wrote in the book. He told *Newsweek* that Amazon did not inform him of its decision to pull the book; he realized it had vanished from the site as well as associated services after a potential customer informed him. {eo}

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