



## LGBTQ+ INITIATIVE THREATENS RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

### WHAT IS THE MATTER AT ISSUE:

- A petition initiative seeks to amend Michigan's civil rights law.
- The proposal radically diminishes protection for religious exercise, while giving special increased coverage for sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression.

### EXPLAINING WHAT IS REALLY GOING ON:

- This politically leftist petition initiative aims to add sexual lifestyle protections to Michigan's anti-discrimination law.
- The proposal intentionally relegates the free exercise of religious conscience into irrelevance.
- Purportedly in the name of civil rights, proponents seek special preference for classifications concerning sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression.
- Revealing their actual political agenda though, the proposal cruelly dilutes existing protection for religion, defining it so narrowly as to provide virtually no protection at all.
- Grounded in misrepresentation, this leftist-leaning political agenda is armed with the full enforcement power of the state.
- Make no mistake about it. Activists plan to wield the proposed law as a weapon to destroy their opponents in one of the great cultural debates of our time.
- The evidence clearly shows that the impetus for the activists' proposal in no way relates to advancing civil rights;
  - The activists seek nothing less than compulsory civil acceptance of sexual conduct by force of law and punishment.
- Those who believe that biology and anatomy are more than a social construct should not have to risk litigation and financial ruin to protect their daughters from men invading their bathrooms or showers.
- Moreover, the law ought not cloak men with the full enforcement power of the state to enter these most private of places.
- Governments often wield so-called anti-discrimination initiatives as a weapon to oppress religious people.
- At the urging of leftist activists, government authorities increasingly use laws like the one proposed here to silence and financially cripple Christian people of conscience.
- The exponential expansion of government actions interfering with an individual's exercise of religious conscience is especially prevalent in cases involving small and family-owned businesses.
  - Recent cases against bakers, printers, and bed and breakfast proprietors illustrate the point.
  - In a deliberate abuse of power, Michigan authorities are currently investigating Christian business owners for violating the provisions of this petition initiative, even before its proponents obtained a single signature.
- Elsewhere, government authorities in Houston, Texas, issued subpoenas to Christian pastors.
  - The subpoenas ordered the pastors to give copies of their speeches and sermons related to "homosexuality, or gender identity" to the government for its review.
  - The subpoenas further demanded the pastors produce their e-mails, instant messages, text messages, and diaries, as well as communications to members of their congregation and legal counsel.



LGBTQ+ Initiative Threatens Religious Freedom  
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- A city in Idaho threatened criminal prosecution of other Christian pastors for not performing same sex weddings in violation of their sincerely held religious conscience.
- Ironically trying to justify their hostile attacks in the name of civil rights, activists focus their ire on a mostly Christian minority.
- Merely defending viewpoints grounded in religious conscience is enough to validate their outrage — especially when those viewpoints threaten “personal autonomy” mantras or protest against forced civil acceptance of all of sexual behavior.
- The fierceness of the opposition to religious conscience makes clear that such attacks are not about civil rights as the activists falsely suggest.
  - It is, rather, about their desire for political power to censure, by force of law and punishment, any idea informed by sacred tenets that might interfere with their anti-faith political agenda.

**INOCULATING AGAINST ACCUSATIONS OF  
BIGOTRY:**

- Christian people know God created all human life in His image.
  - Thus, for Christian people, every person holds inherent value and deserves respect.
  - No follower of Jesus would, therefore, ever discriminate against another person based upon who they are.
  - Christian people will, though, never concede their First Amendment freedom of conscience.
- We condemn invidious discrimination and hold no animus toward anyone.
- We seek respectful consideration of all viewpoints.
  - We reject the fallacy that honest disagreement equates with hate-speech or bigotry.

**A SOLUTION IN SEARCH OF A NON-EXISTENT  
PROBLEM:**

- The activists’ petition initiative proposes a solution to a non-existent problem.
- No evidence of pervasive discrimination exists based on the proposed new categories.
- Not an iota of proof exists that people routinely fire employees based upon their sexual orientation or gender identity.
- No evidence exists that people systemically deny access to educational or employment opportunities based upon the proposed categories.
- Nobody, based upon the proposed categories, ever faced rules requiring them to sit in the back of a bus or use separate but equal public accommodations like bathrooms.
- Occasional, anecdotal stories do not justify sweeping statutory changes infringing on fundamental constitutional freedoms of religious people.
- The test of a properly functioning republic is not whether the government protects the speech and religious rights with which it agrees – it is whether it will protect the speech, religious rights and the economic liberty of those citizens with whom it does not agree.
- Instead of censoring or punishing speech and religious liberty, the answer is always to have more speech and the free exchange of ideas – at least in a republic that values true freedom, pluralism, and diversity.