

Pastors Targeted by Latest California LGBT Proposal



A group of California state legislators are pushing a resolution that would pressure clergy in the state to promote the falsehood that homosexuality and other LGBT behaviors are normal. According to the California Family Council (CFC), Democrat State Assemblyman Evan Low and three dozen other liberal lawmakers are aggressively pushing Assembly Concurrent Resolution 99 (ACR 99), which calls on “counselors, pastors, religious workers, educators” and institutions with “great moral influence” to cease from preaching and teaching that there is anything wrong with individuals identifying as LGBT or participating in homosexual behavior.

As reported by CFC, “ACR 99 also condemns attempts to change unwanted same-sex attraction or gender confusion as ‘unethical,’ ‘harmful,’ and leading to high rates of suicide.”

This is not Low’s first effort at forcing the normalization of homosexuality and LGBT behaviors on California residents. “Last year Assemblyman Low introduced AB 2943, a bill that declares ‘advertising, offering to engage in, or engaging in sexual orientation change efforts with an individual’ as illegal under state’s consumer fraud law,” reported CFC. “After receiving strong opposition from numerous Christian leaders and faith-based organizations ... Low killed his own bill in hopes of coming up with a compromise.”

That compromise turned into ACR 99, which, although if passed would not carry the force of law, would as an official resolution from the State Assembly still carry weight in influencing public opinion.

While Low has recruited a handful of liberal ministers to endorse ACR 99, a number of conservative Christian pastors are speaking out against it, including Ken Williams and Elizabeth Woning, who once identified as homosexual but who are now part of an outreach called Equipped to Love, where they biblically counsel those struggling with same-sex attraction.

Williams and Woning both warn that ACR 99 discriminates against individuals like themselves who overcame homosexuality through faith in Christ. "For us, walking out our faith with biblical conviction means life and hope," explained Woning. "Our faith has saved us from suicide and given us freedom to live with clear consciences." She added that while she, Williams, and others who have left LGBT lifestyles through their Christian faith seek affirmation of the hope and healing they have found, "instead, activists attack our efforts to care for like-minded friends by promoting dangerous counseling restrictions and stifling our free speech."

Williams recalled that "for years I believed that God hated me because of my behavior. But in my early 20s I encountered a God ... who loved me despite my sins and temptations." Williams noted that because of the faith journey that brought him victory over same-sex attraction, "today, I love my life. I have been married to my beautiful wife for 13 years, and we have created four incredible children together. To someone like me, California Assemblyman Evan Low's proposed resolution, ACR-99, feels like an unfair and direct attack."

In addition to Woning and Williams, Joe Dallas, a pastor and Christian counselor, wrote: "While warning against the dangers of so-called Conversion Therapy, ACR 99 restricts much more than counseling, which attempts to change internal sexual responses. It, in fact, dictates to pastors that they cannot teach that homosexuality is a sin, nor can they encourage homosexually attracted people who hold a traditional biblical view to live in accordance with their own faith."

CFC noted that a coalition of professional counselors, doctors, attorneys, and faith-based non-profits have also signed on to an open letter warning of ACR 99's threat to the liberty of Californians. "People should have the freedom to pursue what brings them true happiness and joy," reads the letter. "ACR 99 is trying to cut people off from their own pathway to happiness."

The letter goes on to point out that "professional organizations agree that same-sex attraction and gender dysphoria are not simply biologically caused, they often change." Additionally, the letter observes that "contrary to misrepresentations, therapists who are open to a client's goal of change use non-aversive, well-established mainstream practices and evidence-based treatments for trauma and addictions used by professional therapists worldwide."

The coalition concludes its letter by expressing “grave concern that Assemblyman Low’s resolution, like the discriminatory guilds he references, privileges sexual and gender minorities of so-called ‘progressive’ values and goals at the expense of those of traditional values and goals. It is unconstitutional to strip any person of any First Amendment freedoms, and it is inhumane to prohibit individuals from addressing their own personal pain and desire for healing and change.”

Source:

<https://www.thenewamerican.com/culture/faith-and-morals/item/32657-pastors-targeted-by-latest-calif-lgbt-proposal>

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