



Focus on Religious Freedom

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Catholic Bishops and Other Faith Leaders Urge Stopping the Misguided "Equality Act"

Catholic Bishops and other faith leaders are once again urging people to contact their U.S. Senators via social media, email, or by phone as they prepare to vote on the misguided "Equality Act." The House of Representatives passed this well-intentioned but ultimately harmful legislation that "discriminates against people of faith, threatens unborn life, and undermines the common good" ⁽¹⁾ on February 25, 2021 and it can be voted on by the Senate at any time now.

The USCCB (US Conference of Catholic Bishops) explain that while the so-called Equality Act purports to protect people experiencing same-sex attraction and gender discordance from unjust discrimination, in fact, the bill would discriminate against people of faith because of their beliefs about life, marriage and sexuality. The Equality Act also "exempts itself from the bipartisan *Religious Freedom Restoration Act*, thereby infringing on religious freedom and making it more difficult for individuals to live out their faith." ⁽²⁾ "It would mean that Catholics, evangelicals, Orthodox Jews, Mormons, Muslims and many other religious communities could not raise religious objections ... In effect, religious entities would be secularized." ⁽³⁾

According to the USCCB, these are some of the direct effects and possible consequences of this legislation: ⁽⁴⁾

- Require religious organizations to cover gender "transition" procedures in their health insurance plans;
- Force girls and women to compete in sports against males who identify as female;
- Force girls and women to share locker rooms, showers, restrooms, and dorms with males who identify as female;
- Shut down Catholic and other Foster Care and Adoption Agencies who will only place children in homes with a married mother and father;
- Force small businesspeople to support events or create products that violate their beliefs or be put out of business;
- Likely require taxpayers to fund elective abortions and likely force doctors and hospitals to perform abortions against their conscience or beliefs.

Minority Christian leaders have proposed an alternative to this Act called the *Fairness for All Act*, which they say would protect religious liberties as well as preserve the rights of the LGBT community. "Black and Brown Christians worked too hard for the Civil Rights Act to have it revised in ways that would take away basic rights and funding from our communities. The Equality Act needlessly pits the concerns of diverse communities against each other." ⁽⁵⁾

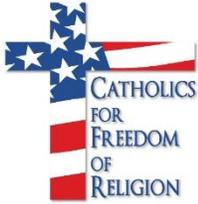
(usccb.org/equality act(1)(2); CatholicLeague, April, 2021(3); usccb.org/stopping-equality-act(4); 1.cbn.com, 3/18/21(5); christianpost.com, 5/16/19; deseret.com, 3/4/21; npr.org, 3/18/21)

Be Silent No More!

Call: U.S. Capital Switchboard at 202-224-3121 to be connected to any Representative or Senators's office. **Email:** Find Senator's email at www.senate.gov ; Find Representative's email at www.house.gov

"Our contest is not whether we ourselves shall be free, but whether there shall be left to mankind an asylum on earth for civil & religious liberty." - Samuel Adams, Founding Father

Shortened Version below:



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(usccb.org/equality act(1); 1.cbn.com, 3/18/21(2); christianpost.com, 5/16/19; deseret.com, 3/4/21)

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