



Focus on Religious Freedom

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Both Religious Leaders and Feminists Alarmed About Threats to Religious Freedom

The Equality Act has garnered criticism from both feminists and faith leaders who called it "flawed, hateful, and unthinking extremism." ⁽¹⁾ "The act is essentially an all-out assault on religious freedom...", said Paul Jonna, counsel for the Thomas More Society. ⁽²⁾

"(This) Act has been advertised as a fight against bigotry. In truth, it's a fight against freedoms guaranteed in the Constitution - (a fear) shared by both radical feminism and traditional religion," wrote Rabbi Yaakov Menken, director of Coalition for Jewish Values and Natasha Chart, chair of Women's Liberation Front. ⁽³⁾ "We agree entirely that the Equality Act is a fatally flawed and even hateful piece of legislation... Congress is prepared to declare anyone who follows the Bible's definition of marriage or who believes women's sports, prisons and shelters should be reserved for biological women, to be in violation of civil rights law." ⁽⁴⁾

The Coalition for Jewish Values (CJV), representing over 1500 traditional, Orthodox rabbis in matters of public policy, calls the Equality Act "a direct attack on Jewish religious values and practices." ⁽⁵⁾ In a letter to the House of Representatives, the CJV wrote:

"The Equality Act expressly declares that the Book of Genesis 2:24, and all Jewish laws pertaining to marriage as a sanctified union between a man & woman, are nothing more than engaged in discriminatory stereotypes. This is a disgraceful attack upon Jewish Biblical beliefs, rendered no more excusable by the fact that other traditional religious groups have similar tenets" ⁽⁶⁾

"Simply put, the Equality Act as written insults our nation's foundational commitment to the rights of religious believers.... (It) would aid those who seek to deny America's religious heritage and who seek to portray religious Americans as bigots and haters. Such hostility toward religion should not be promoted, even unwittingly, by federal law," wrote Rabbi Avi Shafran. ⁽⁷⁾

(thebostonpilot.com, 2/26/21(1)(2); newsweek.com, 2/24/21(3)(4);
religiousnews.com, 2/25/21(5)(6); abcnews.com, 2/25/21(7)

"God who gave us life, gave us liberty. Can the liberties of a nation be secure when we have removed a conviction that these liberties are a gift of God? Indeed, I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just, that His justice cannot sleep forever." - Thomas Jefferson