



Biblical Citizenship Briefing

September 2024

This briefing is strictly for your information. It is a summary of some current public policy issues, including pending legislation, that involve moral and biblical principles. While suggested action may be included from time to time, no specific position by EFCC is implied. Find contact and subscription information at the end of this document.

In California

That's a Wrap! – The 2023-24 legislative session ended August 31. Now, Governor Newsom has nearly 1,000 bills to review and decide whether they will receive his signature or veto. If you wish to share your views on any bills, consider contacting the governor with your views. Phone (916) 445-2841 or complete a contact form at gov.ca.gov/contact. Under “Topic” click “An Active Bill” and select the bill number from the drop-down list. Select “Leave a Comment” and click “Next.” Then, choose pro or con and type a short message like “Please veto AB XXX)” adding more if you desire. Be courteous and factual. Click “Next” and complete your information, then “Submit.”

A Few Key Bills on the Governor’s Desk

AB 1825 Prohibits public libraries (not school libraries) from restricting access to any materials, including those with sexual content, solely because of age. Local communities would be unable to enact policies to keep inappropriate materials out of the children’s section or refuse to lend such materials to minors. Read more [here](#).

AB 2085 removes the autonomy of city leaders to make planning and permitting decisions regarding “reproductive health services” clinics in accord with the desires of the constituents who elected them. Further, it allows abortion clinics to bypass the California Environment Quality Act (CEQA).

AB 2490 establishes a grant program for the purpose of expanding and improving access to abortion in emergency departments across California. Funding may be provided by the Legislature and private sources.

SB 954 requires all public high schools, including charter schools, to make free condoms available to students at multiple unsupervised locations on campus with signage indicated where they can be found and instructions on use. Schools with grades 7 and 8 must allow condoms to be distributed by health center staff, as well as at student clubs and fairs.

SB 1414 was passed to the governor without restoring its original intent. The bill clearly improves current law by making the first offense of soliciting or engaging in commercial sex with a minor under 16 chargeable as either a misdemeanor or a felony (currently a misdemeanor only). The second offense will be a straight felony. Unfortunately, 16- and 17-year olds must prove they were trafficked – a complicating hurdle – for the crimes against them to be charged as felonies. Advocates request that Californians encourage the governor to sign the bill. It’s a strong step in the right direction of justice for child victims and punishment for perpetrators who abuse them.

Find a list of many bills relating to life, faith, education, and family at judeochristiancaucus.com/california (click on “Current Bills”) or at California Family Council’s watch list [here](#). Remember, you may check the status of any bill that interests you at leginfo.legislature.ca.gov. Click on “Bill Information” and search by bill number, topic, or author. *(Referrals are for informational purposes only, does not imply an endorsement by EFCC of the opinions, positions, or contents of the sites.)*

In the Courts

School District Set to Change Policy on Secret Student Clubs – Several schools in the Sacramento area’s Elk Grove Unified School District have established LGBTQ+-promoting UBU and Rainbow clubs for students ages 8 to 12. These meet at lunchtime and have been actively recruiting students to learn about controversial sexual orientation and gender issues without parental notice or consent. A third-grade teacher at one school invited students to attend, telling them that the club was a space for “boys who crush on boys” and “girls who crush on girls” and would have fun games. Parents discovered the secret clubs and that the district had even provided training on how to push back against parental concerns. These parents took their concerns [public](#) and contacted the National Center for Law & Policy (NCLP) in Escondido for assistance. NCLP issued a [cease and desist letter](#) in March asking the district to suspend the clubs as inappropriate for the age of the students and at “the very bare minimum, actual best practices require full written notification to all district parents of what sexuality clubs will discuss and not discuss (i.e., the curriculum) and the opportunity to opt-in or opt-out their child.”

The district responded to the letter and will vote September 17 on a new policy to require parental notice and consent before children can attend campus clubs at any time of the school day and before or after school. Read more [here](#) and [here](#).

These policies and practices are a reminder for parents to be vigilant. Know the policies and procedures for all activities on campus. Get to know your child’s teachers and administrators. Attend school board meetings or watch them online. Agendas are posted before each meeting. Volunteer in the classroom and at school activities. Have an open dialog with your children and ask what happened during their day. **Pray** - *Father, please protect the innocent children in our schools from those who would do them harm. Give parents eyes to see any danger, and success in correcting any harmful policies. In Jesus’ name, amen.*

Detransitioner Sues Planned Parenthood – Planned Parenthood has been [offering](#) “gender-affirming care” (more accurately medical intervention attempting to change one’s sex) for several years, including puberty blockers, hormone therapy, and surgery referrals, as well as social and legal transition assistance. Now, a former patient is trying to hold the abortion giant, its nurse practitioner and other providers accountable for the harm their “care” caused her. Cristina Hineman filed her [lawsuit](#) with the New York Supreme Court in April. She suffered with depression and anxiety from her early teens and would later find that she had undiagnosed Asperger’s syndrome. Like many other young people, Cristina spent hours on social media that fed her fixation on gender identity influencers. At 17, she began to discuss gender issues with one of the defendants (a mental health professional). At 18, she sought out the services of Upper Hudson Planned Parenthood and, after just a 30-minute appointment was given cross-sex hormones. According to their protocols, Planned Parenthood clinicians must give any patient “gender-affirming” cross-sex hormones upon request, without any mental health evaluation or even review of records. At 19, Cristina underwent a double mastectomy by another defendant after a single consultation and without informed consent. She soon realized that her “transition” was not solving her mental health issues, but had caused irreversible changes to her body, pain and PTSD. She began to detransition, but still suffers greatly.

Cristina’s suit alleges that Planned Parenthood is liable for gross negligence and the other defendants for medical malpractice. This is the first such lawsuit in the country against Planned Parenthood. Read more [here](#).

Pregnancy Center Sues AG Bonta – In September 2023, California Attorney General Rob Bonta [sued](#) Heartbeat International for its life-saving work in the abortion pill reversal procedure (APR). Bonta claims that Heartbeat made “false or misleading statements” and engaged in “unlawful, unfair and fraudulent business practices” when they helped pregnant women who regretted taking the first abortion pill and desired to reverse its effects. Heartbeat saves 64-68 percent of pregnancies with this process ([learn more here](#)). They have filed their complaint against Bonta’s suit and are preparing to launch a counter suit.

In the meantime, San Diego’s Culture of Life Family Services (COLFS) has sued Bonta in federal court to stop his unconstitutional attacks on pregnancy centers’ speech regarding APR. Thomas More Society filed the lawsuit in the U.S. Federal District Court in San Diego. “With all of the crime and corruption in California, it is tragic and beyond comprehension that AG Bonta – our state’s top law enforcement officer, with a \$1.3B budget – is using his vast resources to target pregnancy centers and strip women of their right to procreative choice, and their right to continue with a pregnancy through the safe and effective Abortion Pill Reversal process,” said Paul M. Jonna, Special Counsel to Thomas More Society and Partner with LiMandri & Jonna LLP. “Bonta’s actions are politically motivated and blatantly unconstitutional. We are proud to represent COLFS in its fight to protect its rights and the rights of its patients.”

There is hope for the case with news that a federal court in New York [issued a preliminary injunction](#) last month in favor of the National Institute for Family and Life Advocates (NIFLA) and two New York pregnancy centers. They may continue to use the term “abortion pill reversal” and state that progesterone is safe and effective on their websites, resources and social media pending final disposition on the merits of the case. Read more [here](#) and [here](#).

Ninth Circuit Rules for Christian Colleges – On August 30, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals [upheld](#) the dismissal of a lower court in [Hunter v. U.S. Department of Education](#). The 2021 case was brought by several LGBTQ+ advocates targeting Christian colleges Corban University, William Jessup University, and Phoenix Seminary, as well as the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities. Plaintiffs sought to bar students from using federal student aid, grants and loans at schools that hold to religious beliefs on gender and sexuality. The opinion states that legal precedents show “a continuous, century-long practice of governmental accommodations for religion that the Supreme Court and our court have repeatedly accepted as consistent with the Establishment Clause. The examples provided by the Department demonstrate that religious exemptions have ‘withstood the critical scrutiny of time and political change.’” Further, “[T]he exemption seeks to accommodate religious educational institutions’ free exercise of religion. The free exercise of religion is ‘undoubtedly, fundamentally important.’”

In the News

California City Advocates for Parents – AB 1955, the bill to prohibit public schools from adopting policies to notify parents of their child’s gender identity issues at school, will become law in January and faces pending lawsuits. In a local response to the AB 1955, the Huntington Beach city council approved an [ordinance](#) on September 3 requiring that no educators on the city’s recreational facilities, parks, libraries or other city activities “shall withhold any information related to a child’s sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression to parents of said children with or without the children’s consent.” It declares that Huntington Beach is a “Parents Right to Know City.” Opponents on the council say the ordinance will divide the city and undermine the relationship between parents and children. But Councilman Tony Strickland, who voted in the majority, said it’s the state that is driving the wedge between parents and children, declaring, “I do think that some of the arguments of the other side are valid, but at the end of the day. I’m going to fall on the side of parents’ right to know about what’s best for their children.” Read more [here](#).

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