



Written by [Michael Tennant](#) on April 24, 2018

California Bill Would Criminalize Speech, Books Opposing LGBT Agenda

In a direct assault on the freedoms of speech and religion, the California Assembly on Thursday overwhelmingly approved a bill that would, in effect, prohibit the dissemination of traditional Christian teaching on homosexuality and transgenderism.

The Assembly voted 50-14 to criminalize “a transaction intended to result or that results in the sale or lease of goods or services to any consumer” that consists of “advertising, offering to engage in, or engaging in sexual orientation change efforts with an individual.” The bill defines “sexual orientation change efforts” as “any practices that seek to change an individual’s sexual orientation. This includes efforts to change behaviors or gender expressions, or to eliminate or reduce sexual or romantic attractions or feelings toward individuals of the same sex.”



Because the bill amends the state’s consumer fraud act, which applies to goods and services, its critics suggest “it would go so far as to ban the sale of books endorsing the practice, as well as other forms of constitutionally-protected speech,” reports [LifeSiteNews](#).

In its [legal analysis](#) of the bill, the Alliance Defending Freedom (ADF) writes: “At its core, AB 2943 outlaws speech, whether offered by a licensed counselor, a best-selling author, or even a minister or religious leader. It targets a specific message — that an adult who is experiencing unwanted same-sex attraction or gender identity confusion can find help to address those issues — for censorship. The breadth of this censorship is staggering.”

In short, any time money changes hands, it would be illegal to challenge the prevailing LGBT orthodoxy.

[Dr. Robert Gagnon](#) lists several potential outcomes of the bill:

To sell any materials or offer any counseling for a fee that present homosexual practice and transgender identity as wrong or a sin, including all commentaries on the Bible and theological or exegetical treatments that affirm the biblical position on these matters (perhaps even the Bible itself) is to incur criminal sanctions in the state of California....

Any counselor that suggests to clients that homosexual practice or transgender identification is in any way wrong or unhealthy, irrespective of whether they offer “orientation change” services will become a criminal in the eyes of the state.



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No one in the state of California could teach a course at an institution where tuition is paid that in any way challenged LGBTQ ideology, nor could students be required or recommended to purchase books that challenged such.

No church, Christian bookstore, or internet site could be a conduit for the sale of any literature that challenges homosexual practice or transgender identity. Amazon could not sell to California residents any such literature.

The bill's supporters, naturally, deny that it would be construed so broadly. Questioned about the bill's implications, Democratic Assemblyman Evan Low, who introduced it, "claimed that preaching and other forms of speech would be safe; only advertising or selling conversion therapy would be illegal," says LifeSiteNews.

However, as the *American Conservative's* [Rod Dreher](#) observed, "Christians who pay attention are by now immune to the reassurances from the cultural left that their worst fears are overblown." Indeed, it seems few Christians in the know are buying what Left is selling.

"The State of California has no right to deny its residents the resources to help them find happiness or to shut down counselors, schools, and religious organizations that provide those services," California Family Council CEO Jonathan Keller said in a [statement](#). "Every person experiencing unwanted same-sex attraction or gender dysphoria must be allowed to pursue help in achieving their desired goals and outcomes."

The [California Catholic Conference](#) also opposes the legislation, saying, "The broad reach of [the bill] leaves even simple religious speech on same-sex attraction or activities open to legal action and impinges on the basic human right of freedom of religion."

The bill still has to be passed by the state Senate and signed by Governor Jerry Brown to become law. After that, it will almost certainly be challenged in court, where many observers believe it would be struck down as unconstitutional. Whether that turns out to be the case or not, the fact that the bill has gotten this far demonstrates that the militant LGBT crowd and its allies will stop at nothing to silence dissenters.

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