



Written by [James Murphy](#) on November 11, 2023

## Pastor Sues San Diego Mayor Who Removed Him From Commission Over Beliefs

A San Diego area pastor is [suing](#) the city's mayor, Todd Gloria, saying that Gloria violated his First Amendment rights by vetoing his reappointment to a city advisory board over remarks the pastor made about transgenderism. Pastor Dennis Hodges of the Church of Yeshua Ha Mashiach was threatened with removal from San Diego County's Human Relations Commission after he abstained rather than vote for a commission statement condemning transphobia.

An African-American Christian, Hodges has made several biblically backed statements regarding transgenderism, which apparently made his fellow commission members uncomfortable, prompting those opponents to request that the mayor veto Hodges' reappointment. The pastor has been a member of the commission since 2017.

Hodges did not vote against the resolution condemning transphobia, but could not support it either, abstaining rather than voting for it. When asked why he abstained, Hodges quoted scripture, specifically Deuteronomy 22:5: "A woman shall not wear a man's clothing, nor shall a man put on a woman's clothing; for whoever does these things is an abomination to the LORD your God."

Gloria claimed that Hodges "made repeated concerning public comments about LGBTQ people — specifically, the transgender community," and therefore he could not support his reappointment to the commission.

Hodges claims that Gloria's decision to veto his reappointment was "solely based on his beliefs on human creation and transgenderism — issues that are unrelated to his role on the Advisory Board."

"I have dedicated my life to service," Hodges said. "I am standing up for religious people nationwide who have been discriminated against solely because of their faith. What happened to me at the hands of our government should never happen to anyone else."

His attorney, Mariah Gondeiro of [Advocates for Faith & Freedom](#), argues that the mayor's actions are not allowed under the U.S. Constitution.

"People of faith should never be discriminated against because of their convictions," [Gondeiro said](#). "Pastor Hodges's removal from this Commission sets a dangerous precedent for the prejudicial hiring and firing practices of government boards. It is unacceptable that individuals of faith are being explicitly forbidden from serving in government simply because of their faith. The Mayor of San Diego must be held accountable for his unconstitutional actions."



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Hodges is clearly against transgenderism — but is he saying anything truly hateful?

“The binary of male and female is God’s idea. If we are meant to embrace, by divine design, our biological and creational difference as men and women, then it only stands to reason that the confusion of these realities would be displeasing to God...telling someone that he/she is in the wrong is not hateful,” [Hodges wrote](#) in a letter explaining his abstention to the commission’s chair, Ellen Nash.

At a May meeting, Hodges said, “I’m here to support the protection of biological women while in private and sacred spaces.” The pastor added that he favored “keeping gender-specific bathrooms as well as creating gender-neutral, single-use bathrooms.”

And he said at a June meeting, “I am a dark shade of brown, heterosexual, unapologetic Christian man. I don’t say I’m black, because we’re all different shades of brown and we all bleed red.... I am a pastor who preaches from the Bible. To silence me is the ultimate contradiction of what this commission was created for. One set of beliefs should not be allowed to eradicate the other.”

Hodges continued: “I don’t have a hate for homosexuals or transgenders. As a corrections officer I put my neck on the line to protect LGBT inmates from being raped during attacks in prison...I will continue to fight for the rights of others who believe different, including LGBT...I’ve been on [the] police board longer than this because I don’t have a problem working with others.”

District Attorney Summer Stephan, another commission member, accused Hodges of using “religion as a cover to harm someone else.”

“You cannot be a commissioner and quote anything that signifies that any human being is an abomination...We can never on a commission allow religion as a way to express anything hateful, period. End of story...What Hodges is expressing tells me he is going to say something that is harmful in another meeting,” Stephan added.

It appears that Stephan, supposedly an attorney, missed the class in law school explaining that a person cannot be held accountable for what he might do in the future.

The fad of transgenderism is all about silencing those who disagree with it. Calling Bible-believing Christians “hateful” when they disagree with something is just another way of marginalizing God and His word. In his bow to “woke” elements of the San Diego County Human Relations Commission, San Diego Mayor Todd Gloria is normalizing religious bigotry in the name of tolerance.



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