



Written by [Michael Tennant](#) on November 12, 2018

Berkeley Student Senator Under Fire for Abstaining From Pro-Transgender Vote

A student senator at the University of California, Berkeley, is under attack for abstaining from a vote on a pro-transgender resolution because of her Christian beliefs.

According to the [San Francisco Chronicle](#), Isabella Chow, 20, a junior majoring in business administration and music, has faced a relentless onslaught ever since she declined to vote on a resolution that would have condemned the Trump administration for [considering](#) applying Title IX's ban on sex discrimination in education strictly on the basis of an individual's biological sex rather than his chosen "gender identity." The resolution also called on the university to increase its support of "transgender, non-binary, and gender non-conforming students" and various campus groups that back them.



Chow, the only senator not to vote in favor of the measure, explained her reasons for doing so by reading a prepared statement she later [posted on Facebook](#).

"I have said, and will always say, that discrimination against or harassment of any person or people group is never, ever okay," Chow began. She added that her "heart breaks" for those who have endured any ill treatment, "even more so if your pain has come at the hands of bullies and bigots who purport to be Christians but show no ounce of the love and understanding that Christ came to give."

"I cannot vote for this bill without compromising my values and my responsibility to the community that elected me to represent them," she said. "As a Christian, I personally do believe that certain acts and lifestyles conflict with what is good, right, and true.... For me, to love another person does not mean that I silently concur when, at the bottom of my heart, I do not believe that your choices are the best for you."

In other words, just as one would not sit idly by and watch a loved one destroy himself with alcohol — or, worse still, supply him with booze — Chow refused to remain quiet when asked both to affirm and to abet LGBT lifestyles.

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"Within hours," reported the *Chronicle*, "Chow's political party, Student Action, cut ties with her. So did CalTV and her publications constituents. A [student newspaper] editorial called her statements offensive and declared: 'UC Berkeley students cannot allow and accept leaders like Chow to make decisions on their behalf.'" The paper refused to publish her response, saying it "utilized rhetoric that is



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homophobic and transphobic.” On social media, students called her a “horrible person” and a “mental imbecile.”

The Queer Alliance Resource Center, which pushed the resolution, started an [online petition](#) demanding her resignation, claiming she is “blatantly homophobic and transphobic.”

The following week’s senate meeting, which was attended by over 300 people, was [devoted almost solely to criticism of Chow](#).

“Reconciling the LGBT identity with religion is not a Christian issue — it’s a bigot’s issue,” said freshman Kaelyn Schlegel, one of more than 100 protesters who spoke at the meeting.

“I am Christian. I am queer. And I am ‘good, right and true,’” a student named Miranda, who obviously hasn’t read the book on which her professed faith is based, declared. “And I demand Senator Chow to resign!”

According to the *Chronicle*, only three students spoke in support of Chow.

Matt Ronnau, president of the Berkeley College Republicans, said the “mob that has descended upon Senator Chow ... is a disgrace to UC, which should be a place of debate.” The newspaper wrote, “The crowd responded with laughter, and groaned when Ronnau asked if they didn’t think conservatives and Christians were marginalized groups at UC Berkeley.”

Sophomore Daniel Frise accused Chow’s detractors of imposing a “religious litmus test” for serving in the senate.

Chow told the *Chronicle* she has been ostracized for dissenting from the LGBT line. “I go to classes, and people are looking at me. I’ve been painted in such a negative light. Everybody’s talking about it. No matter how much I tried to say, ‘I can love you and still disagree with you,’ people still interpret my disagreement with being a bigot and a hater.”

Nevertheless, Chow says she has no intention of resigning. “Because if I do, there will be no one else to represent the voices that are ignored and misunderstood on campus.”

Photo of UC-Berkeley campus: [Zpwilliams / Wikimedia Commons](#)



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