Last week, the U.S. House of Representatives narrowly passed, and sent to the Senate, a piece of legislation known as the **H.R.5 Equality Act**. This is a bill that should deeply disturb us all—and move us to action.

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**Implications of the Equality Act**

At its core, the Equality Act is an attack on numerous bedrock legal and constitutional principles which form the foundation on which our nation rests, including the freedom of speech and the freedom of religion. The Equality Act is also an attack on all citizens who hold a biblical view of creation and the human person. It does so by elevating sexual orientation and gender identity to the status of a “protected class” in Federal non-discrimination law. Although this addition sounds harmless enough, it will usher in a host of radical legal and cultural changes that will negatively impact every American citizen and institution. Most notably, this will include the Church and its associated agencies as well as our schools, Pre-K through university.

More specifically, the Equality Act will install an extreme gender ideology as the official doctrine of the U.S. government at all levels, marking anyone who holds a scriptural understanding of sexuality and morals as a virtual enemy of the State and a target for re-education. It also very intentionally and explicitly restricts our religious freedom rights, reducing them to a secondary status, by decreeing that the [Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993 (RFRA)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religious_Freedom_Restoration_Act) cannot be used by religious citizens to shield themselves from these newly expanded non-discrimination laws—laws which, ironically, seem designed to force religious people to violate their own religious beliefs and / or consciences. Further, under the Equality Act, faith-based adoption and other social agencies, as well as faith-based schools and universities, will be placed in conscience-compromising positions which will threaten their continued existence.

In addition, business owners and creative professionals will be forced to espouse messages with which they deeply disagree—see the cases of [Jack Phillips and Barronelle Stutzman](https://www.onevoteforpolicy.org/Minnesota), for example. Women will be placed in untenable situations in matters of their personal privacy and in competitive sports. And medical professionals will be denied rights of conscience as they are forced to carry out medical procedures (e.g., abortion or sex reassignment surgery) which violate their best medical judgment and / or their conscience. On and on it goes, as society in general and every citizen in particular are
heavily pressured into “falling in line,” in both word and deed, with this new secular sexual orthodoxy.

How you can act

All this, of course, leads to the inevitable question: “What can we do about all this?” It seems to me that our response will take several forms.

First, in the political realm, we need to be informing our elected officials that this is not acceptable policy. We must contact and urge our U.S. Senators (Amy Klobuchar and Tina Smith) not to support this legislation. The same is true of President Biden—though he has already, sadly, expressed his support for the Equality Act.

Second, we must be active in sharing what we know about this bill and its effects with those in our social circles and with our congregational members. These are direct attacks against the freedom of the Church to proclaim the whole truth of God’s Word, and we must be vocal in our objections, and it is appropriate to do so in the setting of the Church. To that end, I would point you to several resources for more detailed information to share:

- The True Impact of the “Equality Act” by ADF
- What to Know About the Equality Act by Kenneth Craycraft
- The Equality Act’s Assault on Religious Liberty by Kenneth Craycraft

Finally, as the Church, we must be steadfast in praying for the welfare of our nation and its people, as well as energetic in our preaching and teaching of the Bible’s full counsel, Law and Gospel. In particular, we should be stressing the following three facts:

1. We are created and not evolved beings, and we live in a created and orderly world not an evolved and chaotic world.

2. We are all sinful people, and it is our universal captivity to our sinful desires—not our race or gender as per Critical Theory—that gives rise to the evils and corruptions of this world.

3. (most importantly) The full and free forgiveness of sins is not limited to those of a particular race or gender but is available to all for Jesus’ sake.

This current circumstance also adds much greater urgency to our current efforts to give parents true choice in education by giving them the financial resources they need to freely choose which schools (secular or religious) they will partner with in the education of their children. (More about this in our next “One Voice” edition!)
Conclusion

In summary, it is difficult to communicate the magnitude of the consequences the Equality Act will have without seeming hyperbolic. Nevertheless, I believe this is a piece of legislation that we should oppose using all legal means at our disposal. For the sake of the nation and the welfare of our neighbor . . . for the sake of the Church and its proclamation of the Gospel in the public square . . . this is an issue on which we must act.

For reliable and timely updates on this and related issues, I would recommend going to the websites of the Family Research Council, BreakPoint Daily by The Colson Center, or The Daily Signal from The Heritage Foundation.

In Christ,

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