

2022 STATE OF THE **SECULAR STATES**

A Review of State Legislation Affecting the Separation of Religion and Government





©2023 BY AMERICAN ATHEISTS. American Atheists owns all rights, title, and interest in and to this publication and all derivative works thereof. Permission for reproduction and redistribution is granted if the publication is (1) reproduced in its entirety and (2) distributed free of charge. If you would like to request use of state maps or scorecards, please contact us at states@atheists.org.



Table of Contents

4	INTRODUCTION
	<small>PARTNER PERSPECTIVE</small>
5	THE RIGHT'S EMBRACE OF WHITE CHRISTIAN NATIONALISM
6	KEY DEVELOPMENTS IN STATE LEGISLATION IN 2022
	<small>PARTNER PERSPECTIVE</small>
7	PATCHWORK: ABORTION POLICIES IN THE STATES
11	STATE LEGISLATIVE OUTLOOK FOR 2023
	<small>PARTNER PERSPECTIVE</small>
12	ANTI-ABORTION FAKE CLINICS ARE NOT THE ANSWER TO OUR POST-ROE TROUBLES
15	SELECTED NATIONAL ISSUE SUMMARY MAPS
19	ISSUE ANALYSIS & CATEGORIZATION
	<small>PARTNER PERSPECTIVE</small>
21	ALLOWING SECULAR CELEBRANTS IS A MATTER OF EQUALITY FOR NONRELIGIOUS PEOPLE
	<small>PARTNER PERSPECTIVE</small>
28	ADVANCING GOD'S KINGDOM THROUGH SCHOOL CHOICE
30	ACKNOWLEDGING CONTEXT
	<small>PARTNER PERSPECTIVE</small>
31	TWELVE STEP PROGRAMS ARE NOT A LEGITIMATE TREATMENT FOR NONRELIGIOUS PEOPLE
32	NATIONAL SUMMARY
35	STATE ASSESSMENTS & SCORECARDS
87	OUR ORGANIZATION & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Introduction

This is the fifth edition of our annual State of the Secular States report. Since launching the report in 2018, we have tracked the proliferation of state policies advanced by a network of extreme, well-funded, and well-organized groups aligned with the white Christian nationalist ideology. Our work—and the work of our advocacy partners—exposing the goals of campaigns like “Project Blitz” forced them to rebrand and attempt to hide their true motivation.

Regardless of their claims about valuing religious freedom, the actions of these white Christian nationalist groups make it clear that their ideology is entirely about entrenching Christian supremacy. This reality puts them dramatically out of step with the majority of Americans and is why the movement has doubled down on its anti-democratic inclinations. They believe that members of one religion—their conservative version of Christianity—are entitled to hold power and rule. Any election result that doesn’t end with them in power is, in their minds, illegitimate. And, worryingly, they’re gaining success in the courts and many state legislatures.

Sowing confusion about the electoral process, making it difficult or impossible for certain communities to vote, and spreading conspiracy theories about “rigged” elections all undermine confidence and trust in our democratic systems, giving these extremists the pretext they need to justify anti-democratic minority rule.

It’s perhaps no surprise that the primary vehicle the white Christian nationalist movement has used to advance its anti-democratic agenda is the least democratically accountable branch of our nation’s federal government—the Supreme Court and the judiciary as a whole. With their expanded 6–3 majority, the religious conservative wing of the Supreme Court is flexing its muscle, going out of its way to rule in favor of (generally Evangelical) Christian litigants regardless of the precedent or the facts of the case.

The Court’s decision in *Kennedy v. Bremerton*, allowing a public high school football coach to lead his players in coercive Christian prayers at the 50-yard line, was just one example in 2022 of the majority’s willingness to quite literally make up a set of facts on which to rule.

And in his *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization* decision overturning *Roe v. Wade*, upending 50 years of precedent protecting the right to abortion, Justice Samuel Alito was less focused on the facts of the case than on his own cherry-picked and—in the words of professor of history and law Leslie J. Reagan—“egregiously wrong” version of history to justify undoing *Roe*.

In both of these cases, the Court’s majority cited a nebulous concept of “history and tradition” which, conveniently, always seems to align with their preferred policy outcomes. These rulings, like much of the Christian nationalist project in American public policy, are about “returning” America to an imagined history that has never actually existed and entrenching special privileges for those who see their cultural dominance and power slipping away.

Unfortunately for those charged with implementing policies that adhere to the Court’s decisions, the inconsistent outcomes rooted in this newly created doctrine provide no guidance for how to proceed. This uncertainty, along with the clear favoritism shown to religious litigants, has become a weapon wielded by our Christian nationalist opponents.

Which generally applicable laws intended to protect LGBTQ people, religious minorities, or women might offend the Court’s sense of “history and tradition,” particularly if these new laws incidentally burden the religious practice of Evangelical Christians? Which public health and safety laws might be struck down simply because churches don’t receive preferential treatment? And which special privileges for religion can no longer be undone because doing so would, in the eyes of this biased Court, be evidence of some sort of hostility to religion, rather than a commitment to equality and pluralism?

Christian nationalists and their political allies hope that the uncertainty that they’ve created leads to timidity and paralysis on our part, an unwillingness to even try to vindicate our rights or advance justice. We cannot allow them to succeed. We have opportunities in states across the nation to undo the damage that’s been done and make real progress. But that is only possible if we act boldly—and smartly.

This year’s State of the Secular States Report identifies areas of policy where progress is possible and where taking action will make a real difference in the lives of our fellow Americans. I hope that this report continues to be a valuable resource and helpful tool for those who share our commitment to secular government and equal protection under the law.



Nick Fish

NICK FISH
President
American Atheists

PARTNER PERSPECTIVE

The Right's Embrace of White Christian Nationalism

PHILIP GORSKI, Ph.D.

Chair, Department of Sociology, Yale University

Until recently, the term “Christian nationalism” (CN) was rarely heard outside of academic circles. That changed after Trump’s failed coup attempt. In the days and months following January 6, 2021, CN entered the public debate. It made its first appearance in national newspapers and magazines such as the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post* and *The New Yorker*. Some religious and political leaders then began to openly embrace the label. Now, some far-right “thought leaders” are writing books and essays “making the case for CN.” The rhetoric and rituals of CN have also become a common feature of MAGA extremism.

Just what is “Christian nationalism?” In our recent book, *The Flag and the Cross*, Sam Perry and I offer two definitions: “deep story” and “political vision.” The deep story of CN is a mythological version of American history. It runs roughly as follows: “America was founded as a Christian nation; the founders were traditional Christians; the founding documents are based on Biblical principles; America has a special role to play in history; it has therefore been blessed with enormous power and prosperity; however, those blessings and those missions are endangered by the presence of non-whites, non-Christians, and non-native born people on American soil.” The deep story is deeply rooted in conservative Christianity. It features in Christian history and government textbooks used by Christian schools and Christian homeschoolers. And it is actively promoted by a CN industrial complex that produces books, movies, and events.

The deep story about America’s past undergirds a political vision of its future, a future in which white American Christians are the dominant group (again). In *The Flag and the Cross* and elsewhere, Perry and I show that CN is powerfully associated with various political positions including: opposition to immigration, abortion, gun control, and mask-wearing and support for punitive policing, mass incarceration, capital punishment, gerrymandering, voter suppression, and—as should be obvious by now—support for Donald Trump. An earlier book by Sam Perry and Andrew Whitehead, *Taking America Back for God*, revealed that somewhere nearly half of the American population embraces CN to some degree, while somewhere between 20 and 25% do so strongly. The latter group includes nearly 80% of white evangelicals and also nearly half of white Catholics and non-evangelical white Protestants. Recent polls released by Pew and 538 have strongly confirmed these findings. CN is not a “fringe” phenomenon. Nor is it just a Christian phenomenon. Paradoxical as it may seem, many non-Christians and non-believers also embrace CN. It has become a core element of contemporary conservatism.

CN is also a racial ideology. This is why Perry and I refer to it as *white* Christian nationalism (WCN). As we show in *The Flag and the Cross*, CN first crystallized during the late 1600s. This was a period of brutal warfare between the English colonists and the native peoples. WCN provided a theological justification for seizing native lands and exterminating indigenous people. New England was to the colonists what Israel was to ancient Jews: a Promised Land. It was their right and their duty to seize it, by any means necessary. This was also the period when “Black” came to mean “slave” and vice versa. WCN also provided a justification for racial slavery. Africans were the descendants of Hamm, whom God had condemned to eternal bondage. From the beginning, then, CN was entangled with white supremacy.

But that is all in the distant past. Is WCN *still* a racist ideology? Yes. Amongst American whites, CN is statistically correlated with measures of anti-Black animus and white grievance. For example, the more strongly respondents embrace WCN the more likely they are to oppose interracial marriage and adoption, and the more likely they are to believe that whites are subject to racial discrimination.

WCN is also a patriarchal ideology. It always has been. Like any story, the deep story has its protagonist. Usually, it is a straight, white, conservative, Christian man. His credo is “freedom, order, and violence.” Which is to say *his* freedom, order for everyone else, and “righteous” violence for anyone who steps out of line. In *The Flag and the Cross*, we refer to this as the “holy trinity” of WCN. It may not sound particularly “Christian.” But as the historian Kristin Kobes Du Mez points out, Christian conservatives couldn’t make John Wayne into Jesus, so they made Jesus into John Wayne, a freedom-loving, “politically incorrect” tough guy.

How does WCN shape the policy goals of the American Right today? It is often said that the contemporary Republican Party has no policy platform because it has devolved into a cult of personality devoted to Donald Trump. This is an exaggeration. In practice, the MAGA GOP remains just as devoted to the material interests of the “donor class” as ever (e.g., lowering taxes, cutting spending, and deregulating the economy). For “the base”, as ever, there are circuses: anti-trans bathroom bills, mask protests, and anti-critical race theory (CRT) legislation, to name a few recent examples. And, joining them together, the more serious business of rigging the vote and implementing minority rule.

At first glance, this may seem like a grab-bag of issues. What holds them together—the bag if you will—is WCN. “Transgenderism” threatens heteronormative masculinity. Masks threaten “freedom.” CRT—which is to say: any mention of racial injustice—undercuts the heroic role of the white man in the deep story. And voter suppression and gerrymandering are just so many means of making sure that the vote belongs to “real Americans.”

Key Developments in State Legislation in 2022

The 2022 state legislative session was one of the most destructive for civil rights and equality in American history. A substantial minority of state legislatures, relying on forecasted outcomes by an ideologically biased U.S. Supreme Court, destroyed decades of civil rights progress, targeted vulnerable minority groups, and undermined electoral processes prior to the 2022 election.

The Supreme Court Drives Legislative Action, Especially Regarding Abortion

The U.S. Supreme Court had perhaps the single greatest influence on the activity of state legislatures during the 2022 legislative session. Many significant decisions issued this term impact the states, including *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* (eliminating the constitutional right to abortion), *Carson v. Makin* (requiring states to pay for religious schools), *Kennedy v. Bremerton School District* (overturning protections against violations of church-state separation and allowing school staff to engage in religious activities), *New York State Rifle & Pistol Association v. Bruen* (drastically limiting laws regulating firearms), and *National Federation of Independent Business v. Department of Labor* (overturning federal rules requiring COVID vaccination or testing in workplaces). States passed various bills either in anticipation of these decisions, as a response to or consequence of these decisions, or even to raise relevant issues up to the Court so that they could facilitate desired outcomes.

The Supreme Court's influence on state legislative activities can be most clearly seen by the waves of abortion-related legislation considered prior to and after the *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* decision. Even before the Court's opinion overturning *Roe v. Wade* was leaked in May 2022, state legislatures were preparing to pass a large number of abortion restrictions which, before the *Dobbs* decision, would have been clearly unconstitutional. Prior to the *Dobbs* decision, the Guttmacher Institute reported that 37 abortion restrictions were passed in 10 states and 14 measures protecting abortion were passed in eight states.

Altogether, the Guttmacher Institute reported that in 2022, 85 bills that ban all or most abortions in a state were introduced

and nine were passed into law. After the decision, we saw rapid legislative action by lawmakers both supportive of and opposed to abortion (see partner analysis, Patchwork: Abortion Policies in the States). Several states whose legislatures had already closed had special sessions in order to take up abortion restrictions. Others took steps to reinstate existing laws that predated *Roe*, which had not been enforced for decades. More progressive states passed packages of legislation to protect abortion, to ensure sufficient medical infrastructure for waves of patients coming from abortion-ban states, and in some cases, to protect doctors and health staff from the enforcement of other states' harmful laws.

The influence of the Supreme Court was also apparent when it comes to Texas SB 8-style abortion bans, which allow private citizens to sue someone they believe helped a woman get an abortion and greatly stacks the litigation in the plaintiff's favor. Even though this law deviates grossly from standard civil law practices, the Court refused to take action to block it. Subsequently, Oklahoma and Idaho passed similar laws.

"Parental Rights" and Politicization of Schools

The war on so-called "gender ideology" and "critical race theory," ideologies that are supposedly dominating public school classrooms, continued in 2022 and metastasized into a broader movement that claims to protect "parental rights." Conservative lawmakers, seeing some success in this approach after victories in off-year elections in states like Virginia, quickly adopted this framing, seeking to make "parental rights" a major issue for the 2022 midterm elections. In a number of states they introduced "parental rights" bills that created vague and punitive mandates resulting in censorship and surveillance in

PARTNER PERSPECTIVE

Patchwork: Abortion Policies in the States

JENNIFER DRIVER

Senior Director of Reproductive Rights, State Innovation Exchange

In 2022, the United States hit the high water mark of abortion restrictions passed in state legislatures, with over 540 restrictions introduced in 42 states and 42 abortion restrictions enacted in 11 states. Anti-abortion legislators were relentless in their attacks on abortion access, testing the limits of the U.S. Supreme Court majority and laying the groundwork for when *Roe v. Wade* would be weakened or eliminated entirely. That time came with the *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* decision that upheld Mississippi's 15-week abortion ban and explicitly overturned *Roe*.

While the debate around this issue was hyper-focused on the Supreme Court, many overlooked the most important battleground of the abortion rights fight: state legislatures. Texas' blatantly unconstitutional abortion ban, SB 8, made it clear that anti-abortion lawmakers will introduce egregious bills—and the Supreme Court made it clear that it will do nothing to stop them. This is despite recent polling showing that 80% of Americans support the legal right to abortion. This was reaffirmed by the overwhelming showing of voters in Kansas rejecting a measure that would remove protections for abortion from the state constitution. Despite this popular support, anti-abortion lawmakers continue to attempt to ban access to abortion. States such as Idaho and Oklahoma embraced this extreme Texas law by passing similar statutes.

In the aftermath of the *Dobbs* decision, most abortions are now banned in at least 14 states. The most recent law, signed by West Virginia Governor Jim Justice, bans nearly all abortions in the state. This came mere days after Indiana's ban on nearly all abortions, the first state to draft and pass a full ban on abortion after *Roe* was overturned, took effect and after Senator Lindsey Graham proposed a national ban on abortion after 15 weeks.

While more state legislatures are considering restrictions, others are strengthening abortion rights. Some states have already acted to protect the legal right to abortion. In 2019, New York enacted the Reproductive Health Act to codify the *Roe* ruling into state law, and Illinois enacted a similar law to protect all individual decision-making around reproductive health, including abortion, contraception, and pregnancy care. In 2021, New Mexico repealed a pre-*Roe* law on the books that criminalized abortion, ensuring that legal abortion continued to be protected in the state after *Roe* was overturned. In Maryland legislators passed HB 937, the Abortion Care Access Act, Delegate Ariana

Kelly's bill that expands who can perform abortions in the state and provides \$3.5 million in financial support to clinically train health care professionals to offer reproductive services. The bill will also make the state's existing abortion care coverage under Medicaid permanent and require most private health insurance plans to cover abortion care without cost-sharing or deductibles.

But protecting the legality of abortion is only step one. State legislators now have a duty to unapologetically protect the abortion access people everywhere will need in the face of a confusing and patchwork landscape. Some states, like Washington state, are removing any public or private insurance coverage restrictions on abortion. And in New York, Attorney General Letitia James called for the creation of a state fund to support the cost of transportation, accommodations, and abortion care for patients seeking treatment in New York if their own state has banned abortion.

Additionally, some states, like California and Maine, have expanded their provider pool to meet the needs of thousands of patients crossing state lines to access abortion care. States like Virginia and Illinois are repealing existing abortion restrictions, while others such as New Jersey have taken steps to protect abortion clinic employees from possible harm. And just this past session, Connecticut passed a law to mitigate the harm caused by deceptive crisis pregnancy centers. Good policies being proposed include a Massachusetts bill to make medication abortion available on college campuses and a plan in Georgia to ensure that communities of color are centered in any new legislation to protect abortion rights.

Abortion restrictions create additional financial and logistical barriers to accessing basic, necessary reproductive health care services. These laws often force people seeking abortion to travel long distances to get care, which can require taking time off from work, arranging transportation, and paying for child care. Beyond the financial burdens of abortion restrictions, there is also the threat of criminalization. More than 1,700 women have been arrested for pregnancy outcomes since the 1973 *Roe* ruling through 2020. And the impact of these restrictions falls most heavily on those who already disproportionately lack access to health care, including people struggling to make ends meet, Black and brown people, and LGBTQ+ individuals. At their core, policies that restrict abortion are racist, xenophobic, and designed to exert power over and control people's bodies.

schools. Some sought to increase “school transparency” by placing impossible demands on teachers and administrators – some even proposed to require live video of classrooms! Other bills allowed parents to opt their children out of any class that may disagree with their religious beliefs. For example, a parent might opt a student out of biology classes (if they have religious objections to evolution), history classes (if they disagree with the characterization of the U.S. Civil War), geography (if they believe the Earth is flat), or even math (after all, the Bible implies that π equals 3).

Unfortunately, 2022 also saw the first fruits of the laws banning “critical race theory” passed in 2021, and they are every bit as harmful and racist as suspected. In states that had passed laws like Florida’s “Stop WOKE Act,” diversity and inclusion programs were scrapped, libraries were stripped of books by Black and LGBTQ authors, teachers were given confusing and vague instructions about how to teach “both sides” of events like slavery and the Holocaust, and Black and LGBTQ teachers and administrators were made targets of fanatical parents, in some cases even losing their licenses.

Florida, not content to merely undermine public education through voucher programs and attacks on diversity education, also passed the infamous “Don’t Say Gay” bill, which its sponsors claimed was about “Parental Rights in Education.” In fact,

this censorship bill prohibits “classroom instruction... on sexual orientation or gender identity” for any student in a manner that is not “age-appropriate” (as determined by the Florida Board of Education). In order to avoid serious consequences, schools are forced to interpret this conservatively, and they have responded by disbanding supportive groups for LGBTQ students, telling teachers to redirect and distract if students mention LGBTQ people or issues, removing visible support for LGBTQ students such as safe space stickers and rainbows, and removing any books from reading lists and libraries that mention LGBTQ people. Several states have since copied this legislation, and in many states, conservative lawmakers emphasized it as a campaign issue for the 2022 election.

Relying on fringe groups of fanatical parents, white Christian nationalist lawmakers in these states are using the “parental rights” framework to harness the frustration and uncertainty of parents to achieve political gains, regardless of its impact on vulnerable students. Along with an increased emphasis on school voucher programs that divert public education funding to private, religious schools, these efforts should be understood as a multi-pronged effort to undermine secular public education in the United States.

Oppression by Fiat for Political Gain

Another dimension of state law that often goes unnoticed by the general public is state administrative law, the regulations and guidance adopted by governors and state agencies. In 2022, we saw a number of governors who were unable to pass their destructive agenda through state legislatures instead impose these policies by fiat through state agencies. Perhaps most infamously, Governor Greg Abbott of Texas, along with his Attorney General Ken Paxton, declared that providing gender-affirming health care to trans youth is child abuse, requiring the state’s Child Protective Services to waste its limited resources pursuing this political agenda. Teachers and other mandatory reporters of child abuse were forced to turn in supportive families of trans youth, and investigations soon followed. Of course this had a devastating impact on trans youth and their families in Texas – as well as on CPS, which shed hundreds of principled employees who refused to comply with these harmful, politically motivated investigations.

We saw similar activity in other states. In Florida, Governor Ron DeSantis, a master of using bullying tactics to target minorities, unilaterally purged elected local officials that failed to follow his agenda, and he used a hand-picked Board of Medicine to prohibit care for trans youth. In Florida and South Dakota, state boards of education added elements of white Christian nationalism to their curriculum standards for social studies. In fact, Gov. DeSantis coordinated with Hillsdale College and other Christian nationalist groups to develop biased new teacher training modules based on these standards. In Virginia,



A protestor holds a “Bans Off Our Bodies” sign at the NYC Bans Off Our Bodies protest following the reversal of *Roe v. Wade*.

Governor Glenn Youngkin declared that “critical race theory” was banned from public schools, and he replaced supportive guidance for schools concerning trans youth with harmful mandates that would segregate and stigmatize them.

In some of these instances, the state courts put a stop to this misuse of state agencies to target minorities for political ends – but only because they were not authorized by statute. Once the 2023 legislative session starts in these states, these governors may push for authorizing legislation, and these dangerous policies may be passed into law, making them more difficult to stop.

Misusing the Constitution to Undermine Democracy

Lastly, in 2022 we saw a continued erosion of democratic norms, justified by politically amplified lies about fraud in the 2020 election and facilitated by the courts. It is generally accepted that states must follow both federal law and their state constitutions when it comes to administering elections. But conservative lawmakers are using a fringe theory called the “independent state legislature” (ISL) theory, which they argue is rooted in the U.S. Constitution, to argue that only state legislatures can determine state election rules. This theory is at issue in the *Moore v. Harper* case before the U.S. Supreme Court this term. If adopted, this theory would mean that state courts could not limit or overturn laws even if they violate the state

constitution or the rights of voters. Due to recent Supreme Court decisions that undermine the Voting Rights Act and prohibit federal courts from stopping extreme gerrymandering, states legislatures have even more power to suppress voting blocs and implement restrictions with disparate racial impacts.

In 2022, we saw about a quarter of state legislatures already take advantage of recent rulings by actively stripping enforcement power from state and local election officials, enabling themselves to potentially declare elections fraudulent in order to choose their preferred results. For example, these laws may increase legislature oversight of elections or impose potential criminal penalties or fines on election officials. Other states continued to pursue race-based gerrymandering, and despite their supposed inability to stop gerrymandering themselves, federal courts have not hesitated to insert themselves into these disputes to stop state courts from blocking illegal, race-based election maps.

While this issue is not directly related to church-state separation, the factions working to undermine our democracy are the same white Christian nationalists seeking power to impose their ideology upon our society. The separation of church and state is integral to our democracy – neither can exist without the other.



A protester holds a “When Equality is Under Attack Atheists Show Up” sign at the Bans off Our Bodies protest in Los Angeles following the reversal of *Roe v. Wade*.

Photo by Evan Clark

2022 State Legislative Highlights

Colorado

Passed a law to require health care sharing ministries to make basic reports and disclosures like health insurers.



Arizona

Passed a law that broadly shields religious organizations from civil liability and enforcement.



South Carolina

Passed a law to allow health facilities and insurers to deny any type of health care based on their religious beliefs, not the medical needs of patients.

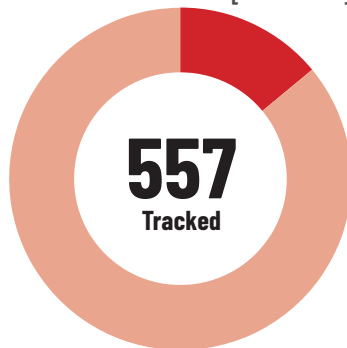


Washington

Passed a law to allow doctors to provide emergency care for pregnancy complications even if prohibited by a religious hospital.



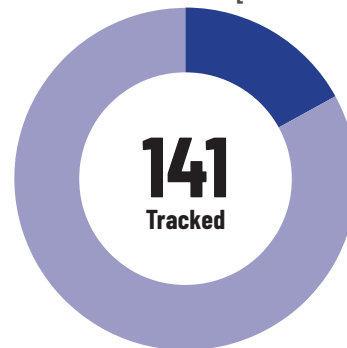
[78 PASSED]



Negative Legislation

We tracked and opposed 557 bills that would have undermined religious equality during the 2022 legislative session. Of these, 78 bills passed and 479 failed.

[24 PASSED]



Positive Legislation

We tracked and supported 141 bills that would protect religious equality during the 2022 legislative session. Of these, 24 bills passed and 117 failed.

State Legislative Outlook for 2023

The 2023 state legislative session will likely replicate the patterns of the past several years: conservative states will pursue culture war politics and target minority civil rights, and liberal states will react to this agenda.

Although control of a few state legislatures was on the ballot in the 2022 election, the impact of the election is more likely to be felt at the federal level. Compared to most midterm elections where the party of the current president has significant losses, Democrats managed to retain control of the U.S. Senate and only narrowly lost control of the House of Representatives. Outcomes in the states were even more surprising where, in states like Michigan and Pennsylvania, Democrats gained control of some state legislatures for the first time in decades. In most states, there was little impact on control of legislative chambers; only in a few conservative states like Florida did Republicans grow their legislative majorities. Although there is much speculation about the reasons for these unexpected outcomes, it is likely that they at least partially result from backlash due to the Supreme Court's decision in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*, the efforts by many lawmakers to use that decision to attack abortion access, and the unrelenting culture war focus of many conservative lawmakers. White Christian nationalism is not broadly popular, and when it becomes as evident that is a lawmaker's primary motivation, it negatively impacts them. For example, avowed Christian nationalist lawmakers lost elections, and the efforts they championed failed to pass, such as the Arkansas ballot measure to add Religious Freedom Restoration Act (see page 22) language to the state constitution.

Despite these outcomes, there is every reason to believe that the state legislative trends we saw in 2022 will continue into the 2023 legislative session, as lawmakers either take advantage of their victories to pursue bills they campaigned on or attempt to distract from their opponents' victories and win political support by engaging in culture war demagoguery. It will take more than one cycle for conservative lawmakers to finally get the message that unending culture war will not win them the hearts and minds of the American people.

Additionally, the many significant U.S. Supreme Court decisions from the 2022 term, as well as the issues at stake in the 2023 term, will continue to impact state legislative activity. On issues such as abortion and religion in schools, we have only begun to see the impact of the Court's dramatic legal shifts upon our

society. In 2023, for the first time, state lawmakers will be fully able to legislate in this new paradigm, unfettered by "trivialities" like constitutional rights.

Religion & Health Care

The state legislatures' actions following the *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* decision foreshadow the upcoming 2023 session's focus on legislation relating to reproductive services. Conservative states with limited abortion restrictions, like Florida, are likely to consider complete bans, potentially challenging state constitutional provisions that protect access to abortion. Although a few states have already passed Texas-style private enforcement abortion bans, it is not clear that others will do so—these laws are unnecessary when states already criminalize abortion. However, we will likely see states further limit exceptions to abortion bans, endangering the lives of pregnant people. We may also see personhood bills, which grant constitutional rights to fetuses from the moment of conception, introduced in some states. These extreme bills not only potentially limit services like in vitro fertilization and subject people who have miscarriages to murder charges, they result in all manner of other absurd legal outcomes.

Displeased that pregnant individuals in their states can still receive abortions in other states, some conservative state lawmakers have threatened to criminalize travel to other states for the purpose of abortion. In reaction, some liberal states have already passed sanctuary bills that seek to protect these patients and the doctors who provide them services, and more states are likely to consider such measures in 2023. This sets up a potential conflict between states' laws as well as various provisions of the U.S. Constitution, so it is likely that we will see all of these measures challenged in court.

We are also likely to see a number of state bills introduced that are tangentially related to abortion and pregnancy. For example, a number of states already provide significant funding to so-called "crisis pregnancy centers," which are anti-abortion

PARTNER PERSPECTIVE

Anti-Abortion Fake Clinics Are Not the Answer to Our Post-Roe Troubles

SHIREEN ROSE SHAKOURI*Deputy Director, Reproaction*

Anti-abortion fake clinics—sometimes known as crisis pregnancy centers, pregnancy resource centers, and other misleading labels—exist to deceive people seeking abortion care and shame them for their choices. In the name of convincing someone to keep a pregnancy that they intended to terminate, these centers often flout medical standards, like HIPAA requirements, and hire unqualified staff to conduct medical procedures. They deploy a stunning array of deceptive and creepy tactics to prevent people from accessing abortion care, including lying about medical information, lying about state laws, and manipulating people with false religious, spiritual, and health implications of their abortion decision. And fake clinics are often supported with taxpayer dollars at the state level as well as through federal programs like Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).

These centers are almost exclusively run by large, well funded Christian organizations that pull in enormous donations. A shocking report by the National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy that reviewed public tax records from 2015-2019 found that over \$4 billion in revenue went to 1291 unique organizations that filed taxes and are known to run fake clinics (and many religious organizations do not file taxes, so we know the total number for all fake clinics is much higher!). This is on top of the twenty-nine states that support anti-abortion fake clinics through state initiatives like vanity license plate programs that rake in tens of millions of dollars, and in addition to the ten states that divert TANF dollars directly to these centers instead of the low-income families who are the intended recipients of these funds.

These organizations often don't even deliver on the 'alternatives to abortion' services they promise. In North Carolina, one fake clinic chain receives millions from the state to offer faith-based counseling and other services to limit abortion rates. However, for years, it has failed to meet grant requirements for services rendered. Even ignoring the huge violation of church and state

separation caused by offering taxpayer-funded religious counseling to those who aren't seeking it, the misuse of public funds is worrying. Similar issues with fake clinics misusing funds happened in Pennsylvania, Texas, and elsewhere.

Fake clinics and the racist, sexist, Christian supremacist, homophobic 'pro life' movement behind them want you to believe they are offering 'help' to women and families in the wake of horrific abortion bans that have swept the country after they won their fight to topple *Roe*. Don't let them rebrand. These organizations provide a smiling face and promises of free diapers (that often don't materialize) to shroud the cruel goals of the far-right: stripping away our rights and coalescing totalitarian control with a fascist interpretation of Christianity as their guiding principle.

We need to fight these groups everywhere, especially at the local level. Actions as simple as flyering the community surrounding a fake clinic can reduce harm and prevent someone from being tricked out of the health care they seek. At the state level, we must oppose give-aways of state funding to fake clinics. At the national level, everyone should call on Big Tech to take responsibility for anti-abortion propaganda on their platforms and end 'pro life' ad buys that spread disinformation and endanger the public.

One thing is certain: people deserve to know fake clinics exist where they live. The Reproaction Fake Clinic Database lists all fake clinics in the country, organized by state. Fighting anti-abortion lies starts in one's own backyard, and sharing information with one's own community makes it easier.

organizations that are usually religious and use deceptive and manipulative tactics to convince pregnant individuals not to have an abortion (see *Anti-Abortion Fake Clinics Are Not the Answer to Our Post-Roe Troubles*). To deflect criticism for the many harms that will result from the criminalization of abortion post-*Dobbs*, states that ban abortion are likely to consider bills to provide even more state funding to these religious organizations.

Similarly, conservative state legislatures are likely to consider dangerously broad denial of care bills, which have been trending over the last few years. Unlike previous denial of care bills focused on specific services such as abortion or contraception, these bills allow denial of any type of care that the provider, hospital, or even insurance company or employer disagrees with for religious or moral reasons. Although only South Carolina passed one of these bills in 2022, states such as Texas and Florida considered these measures during the last session and are likely to reintroduce them. Some of these bills also incorporate an expansive version of the Ministerial Exemption, applicable to religious health care providers, which would basically immunize them against claims for violating labor laws. Notably, although this legislation does not specifically discuss trans people, these bills are likely intended to allow religious refusal of trans-related medical care and other types of care of which conservative Christians disapprove.

Recognizing this increasingly dangerous trend to deny health care on the basis of religion, American Atheists is working to advance legislation intended to help protect access to care. For example, we are working with lawmakers in several states to introduce Health Care Transparency Acts, which ensure that, as part of the informed consent process, patients are informed when they may be denied care by providers. We are hopeful that this proposed legislation may be passed into law in one or more states in 2023.

Lastly, especially after the governors of Texas and Florida callously used state agencies to attack gender-affirming care for trans youth for political gain (see page 8), we are likely to see numerous bills attacking trans health care in 2023. Despite the fact that these bills are clearly driven by animus against trans people, that every mainstream medical and mental health organization condemns them, and that courts have blocked these measures in every instance, lawmakers will continue to put trans children and their families at risk by passing prohibitions on care. We may see some states go further by, for example, criminalizing gender-affirming care for youth or banning care for trans adults. We may also see administrative action that limits trans health care, similar to the actions taken in 2022 by the Florida Board of Medicine.

Religion & Schools

The U.S. Supreme Court's opinion in *Kennedy v. Bremerton School District* was delivered in late June 2022, after the end of most states' legislative sessions. So while we have not yet seen the impact of this dramatic shift in law wrought by this case, we likely will in the 2023 legislative session. On its face, *Kennedy* was about a high school coach who wanted to pray on the 50-yard line after football games. However, in deciding for Coach Kennedy, the Supreme Court specifically overturned a longstanding doctrine of Establishment Clause law known as the *Lemon* test, adding in its place a new test focusing on "historical practices and understandings." What does this mean? Well, no one really knows—and that is the problem. When school staff insert their own religious beliefs into the school environment, whether by praying on the 50-yard line, leading their classes in prayer, or hosting church groups to proselytize at school, parents, students, and teachers, through advocates like American Atheists, can bring suit to stop these activities because they violate the Establishment Clause. However, to successfully do so, there must be clear rules for what crosses the line.

The new "historical" test announced by the Court is vague and manipulable. As shown by the Court itself when deciding *Kennedy*, *Dobbs*, *Bruin*, and other cases based on history, judges can easily cherry-pick facts and records from across history, while ignoring others, to achieve their desired outcome. Like judges, lawyers fighting for state-church separation are not historians—they don't have the resources to comb through decades or centuries of history to develop historical narratives to provide justification for stopping every illegal intrusion of religion into schools. This is especially true because, after *Kennedy*, religious teachers, administrators, and school districts, seeing the floodgates have opened, will make efforts to push religion into schools and impose their beliefs onto students like never before. In 2023, we are likely to see a wave of legislation in conservative states, justified by the *Kennedy* decision, to "protect the religious freedom and free speech of teachers" (by allowing them to engage in religious activities at school or even pray with students) and perhaps even more drastic efforts to insert prayer into public schools.

Given how successful the white Christian nationalists' "parental rights" framing was legislatively and politically in 2022, there is every reason to believe that strategy will continue into 2023. The "parental rights" framework allows lawmakers to sweep in any number of vague, grievance-based issues including, for example, opposition to school requirements on vaccination or masking, allowing religious opt-outs for any subject, book bans, censorship of disfavored topics like "critical race theory" and "gender ideology," mandatory "outing" of LGBTQ students and educators, prohibitions on testing and surveys without explicit parental approval, and many others.

Combined with this focus on so-called “parental rights,” we are likely to see continued attacks on LGBTQ, and especially trans, youth. Some states are already planning to copy the infamous “Don’t Say Gay” bill, which Florida passed in 2022, banning any “classroom instruction... on sexual orientation or gender identity” that is not “age-appropriate” (as determined by the Florida Board of Education). Similarly, we will likely see additional bills banning trans youth from school bathrooms and athletics that align with their gender. Especially given the *Kennedy* decision and other recent lower-court decisions regarding the First Amendment rights of teachers, we may see bills that allow teachers to further stigmatize trans students by misgendering them or refusing to use their preferred names.

Finally, lawmakers using the “parental rights” framing, along with frustration about school response to the COVID pandemic, will continue to push school voucher and tax credit programs in 2023. These school privatization efforts are driven by large Christian nationalist donors who hope to reap financial benefits from disassembling our public education system, while making Christian education the only viable alternative.

First & Second Amendment Issues

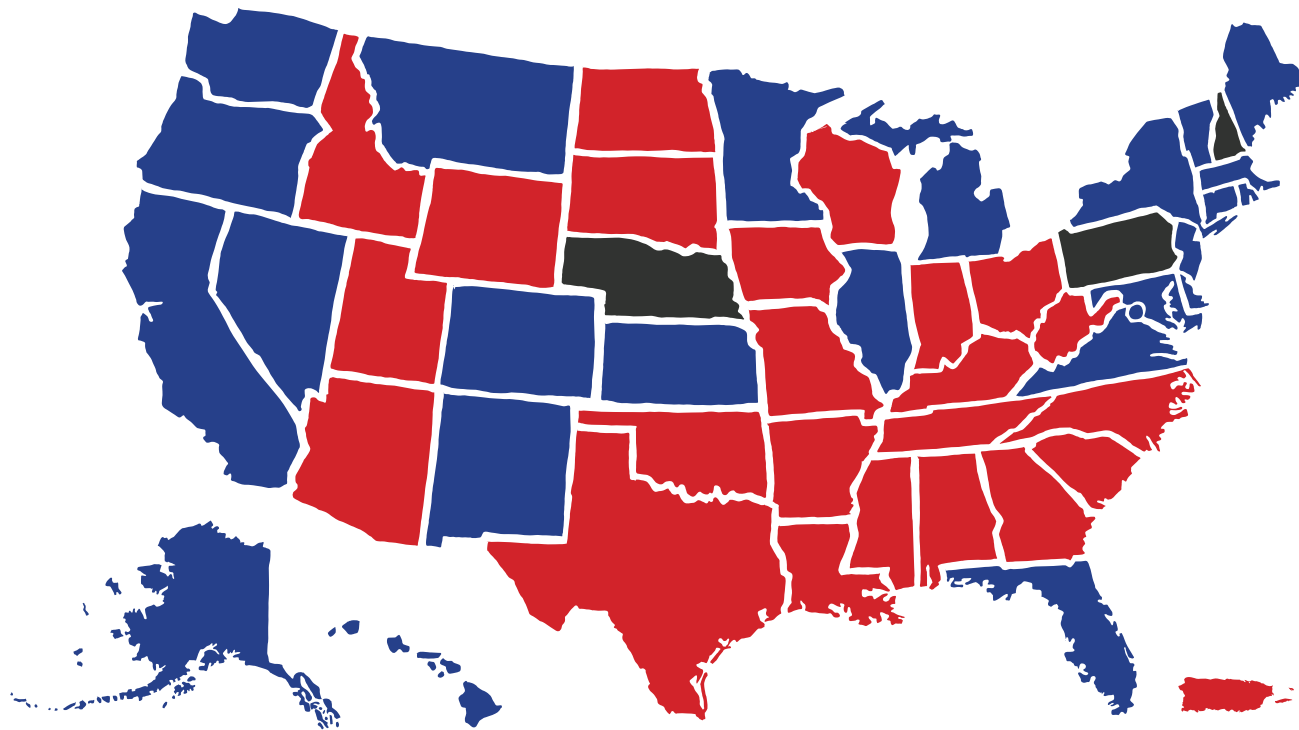
Despite the free speech rhetoric from many conservative lawmakers, it is clear that many have little regard for speech that they disagree with or cannot control. In 2022, both Texas and Florida passed sweeping, wildly unconstitutional bills that would tightly regulate the activities of any large social media platform, such as Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram, that operated in those states. While these bills have been stayed by courts, the situation is very much ongoing, and additional states may pass similar laws to regulate online speech.

Similarly, a number of conservative lawmakers have indicated that they will introduce state legislation to ban drag shows (it is unclear whether this means all such shows or just those viewed by minors). Drag shows are a form of performance by artists who play with gender and impersonate men or women, and like other forms of entertainment, they can be appropriate for all ages or geared towards adults. There have been efforts to use drag performance as a way to introduce young people to LGBTQ people as well as concepts like gender expression and fluidity. Relying upon public stigma against LGBTQ people, lawmakers critical of these educational programs may seek to ban them in various states. Relatedly, there were several state bills introduced in 2022 to greatly expand prohibitions on materials deemed to be obscene, especially with regard to minors, and such bills are likely to continue into 2023. Although these speech restrictions fail to comply with Supreme Court precedent, if upheld, they would allow states to criminalize an array of speech concerning LGBTQ issues and justify book bans.

Finally, we note that after the momentous decision in *New York State Rifle & Pistol Association, Inc. v. Bruen*, which greatly expanded Second Amendment protections, many states will need to reconsider their firearms laws. Like the *Kennedy* case discussed previously, the Court here declared a “historical practices and understandings” test, which means that states cannot regulate firearms at all unless they can show the regulation is rooted in historical practice. Now, especially in more liberal states, lawmakers are in a bind. They need to figure out what restrictions on firearms the Court might think are permissible based on its notoriously fickle interpretation of history and align their laws to match, or risk losing all firearms restrictions. This situation helps to demonstrate just how flawed the Court’s historical approach is when it comes to gun control, abortion, and state-church separation. When the Supreme Court decides that history determines constitutionality, and jurists get to determine history, then it has effectively assumed ultimate authority to decide the law on these hot-button issues.

NATIONAL ISSUE SUMMARY

Access to Abortion



The U.S. Supreme Court's decision in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* overturned the protections for access to abortion first established by the Court 50 years ago in *Roe v. Wade* (1973). Subsequently, states controlled by Christian nationalist lawmakers are now able to strip what had previously been considered constitutional rights from citizens. This map shows laws that protect access to abortion and those that severely restrict or ban access to this care.

A number of states have established constitutional or statutory protections for abortion. For example, many states guarantee the right to abortion through their state constitutions, either directly or as part of the right to privacy or equal protection. While some states with constitutional protections for abortion have shown increasing hostility to abortion, those protections remain in place unless the state constitution is modified through a ballot measure or they are undermined by the state courts. In addition, many states have enacted statutory protections for abortion. The protections can vary quite widely from those that merely codify the legal protections for abortion provided in *Roe v. Wade* to more comprehensive approaches.

In the weeks and months leading up to the *Dobbs* decision, several states passed what amounts to complete bans on abortion, and some states passed such bans soon thereafter. Other states have long had abortion bans that pre-date *Roe v. Wade*. While *Roe* rendered those laws inoperative, in at least some states lawmakers refused to repeal these measures, hoping that they could once again take effect once *Roe* was overturned. Now that this has happened, several of these states are taking action to reassert these laws. In addition, a number of states had passed trigger laws that would ban abortion to some extent if *Roe* were to be overturned. This map shows states with laws that effectively ban all or most abortions through any combination of these various statutes.

States with protections for abortion access

[24 STATES + DC]

Alaska	Kansas	New Mexico
California	Maine	New York
Colorado	Maryland	Oregon
Connecticut	Massachusetts	Rhode Island
Delaware	Michigan	Vermont
DC	Minnesota	Virginia
Florida	Montana	Washington
Hawaii	Nevada	
Illinois	New Jersey	

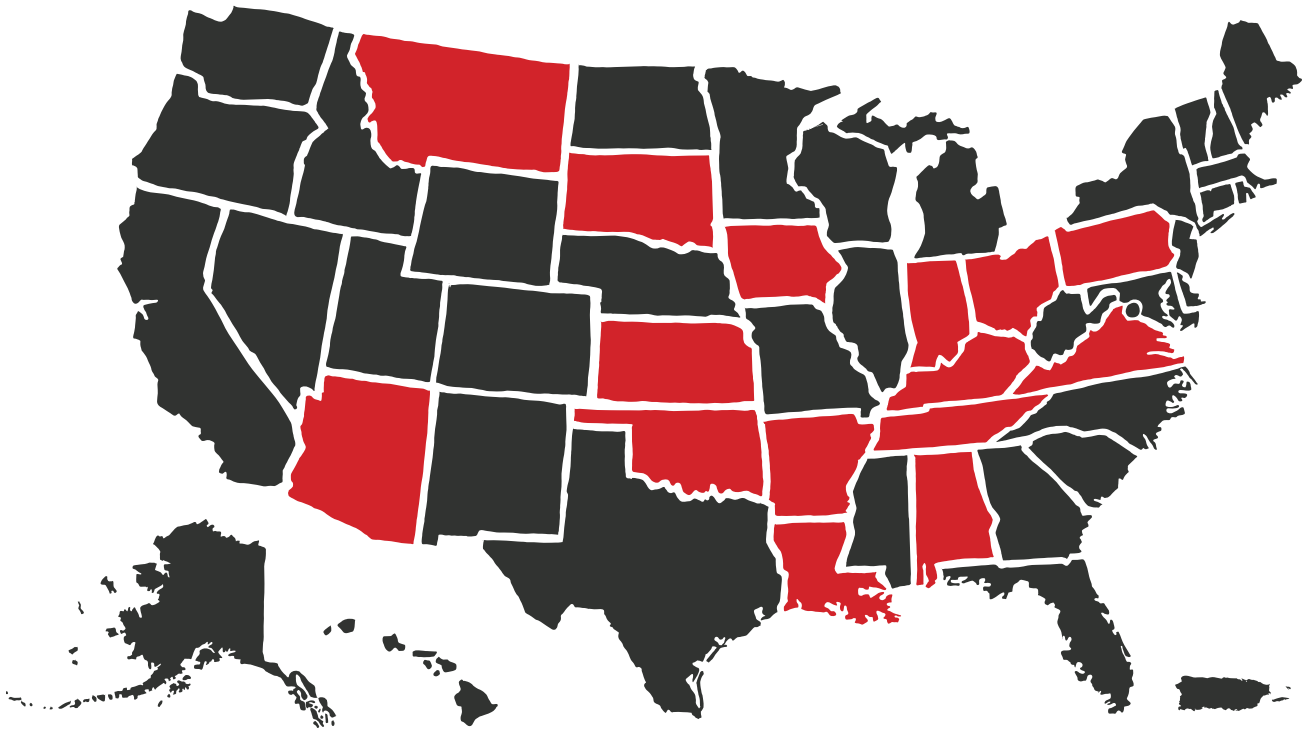
States with bans on all or most abortions

[23 STATES + PUERTO RICO]

Alabama	Mississippi	Tennessee
Arizona	Missouri	Texas
Arkansas	North Carolina	Utah
Georgia	North Dakota	Wisconsin
Idaho	Ohio	West Virginia
Indiana	Oklahoma	Wyoming
Iowa	Puerto Rico	
Kentucky	South Carolina	
Louisiana	South Dakota	

NATIONAL ISSUE SUMMARY

Campus License to Discriminate Laws



The majority of public colleges and universities have nondiscrimination policies that allow students to participate in any recognized student organization, and most colleges and universities collect a fee from students that is provided to these organizations in order to support their programming. The U.S. Supreme Court has made clear that public colleges and universities must treat student organizations equally with respect to recognition and funding—they cannot discriminate based on viewpoint—but they may impose universal requirements such as nondiscrimination policies. These policies are important because they ensure that students are not forced to pay for student organizations in which they are not allowed to participate.

Nevertheless, an increasing number of states are passing laws that prevent public colleges and universities from protecting students from discrimination by student organizations. These provisions, often called “Campus License to Discriminate” laws, create exemptions that allow religious student organizations to enforce discriminatory codes of conduct or discriminate directly against disfavored groups of students, without losing recognition and funding from the school.

These laws are generally sought by religious student groups so that they can exclude LGBTQ people, women, atheists, and religious minorities from their membership and activities. In late 2020, the Trump Administration issued regulations that require all public colleges and universities to allow religious student groups to discriminate. However, in 2021, the Department of Education announced that they would rescind this rule. At this point, this regulation has appeared to have little impact on these state laws.

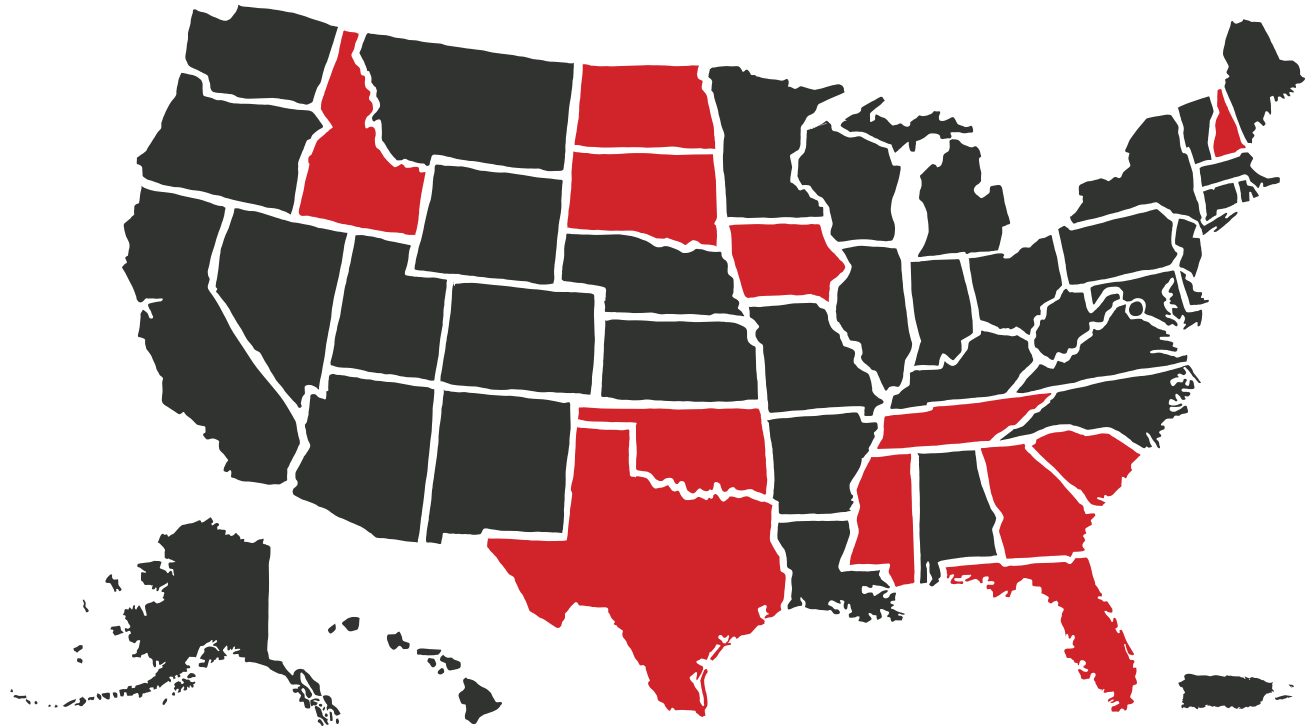
● States with laws that prevent public colleges from enforcing nondiscrimination policies

[15 STATES]

Alabama	Montana
Arizona	Ohio
Arkansas	Oklahoma
Indiana	Pennsylvania
Iowa	South Dakota
Kansas	Tennessee
Kentucky	Virginia
Louisiana	

NATIONAL ISSUE SUMMARY

School Censorship Laws



A number of states have passed laws that prohibit schools from teaching matters that the state deems “divisive,” “controversial,” or which may make students “feel guilty.” These attacks on the free speech of educators and the education of students have been pushed by groups that oppose teaching students accurate history about the civil rights struggles for racial equality and LGBTQ equality in the United States. Legislation in this area is often framed as being about parental rights, as protecting students from activism by teachers, or as school transparency measures. In fact, these bills censor curricula, ban books, persecute teachers, and undermine the rights of students to further the radical agenda of white Christian nationalist politicians.

This map shows states that have passed laws that prohibit teachers in public schools or colleges from discussing topics defined by the state as divisive or controversial. For example, these bills may restrict discussion of racial oppression throughout American history, gender identity or sexual orientation, women’s rights, or other politicized topics. The language used in the bills is intentionally broad and vague, essentially tying the hands of teachers and administrators by putting them at risk for discipline, fines, or even permanent loss of license. Many of them purport to ban topics such as “Critical Race Theory,” even though the subject is only taught in high-level graduate courses. Others ban any discussion that could potentially cause discomfort in students, such as structural racism or feminism. When passed, these laws have had a dramatically negative impact on school environments, frequently leading to book bans, firing and discipline of educators, censorship of curriculum, revocation of diversity and inclusive education programs, and stifling of student discussion.

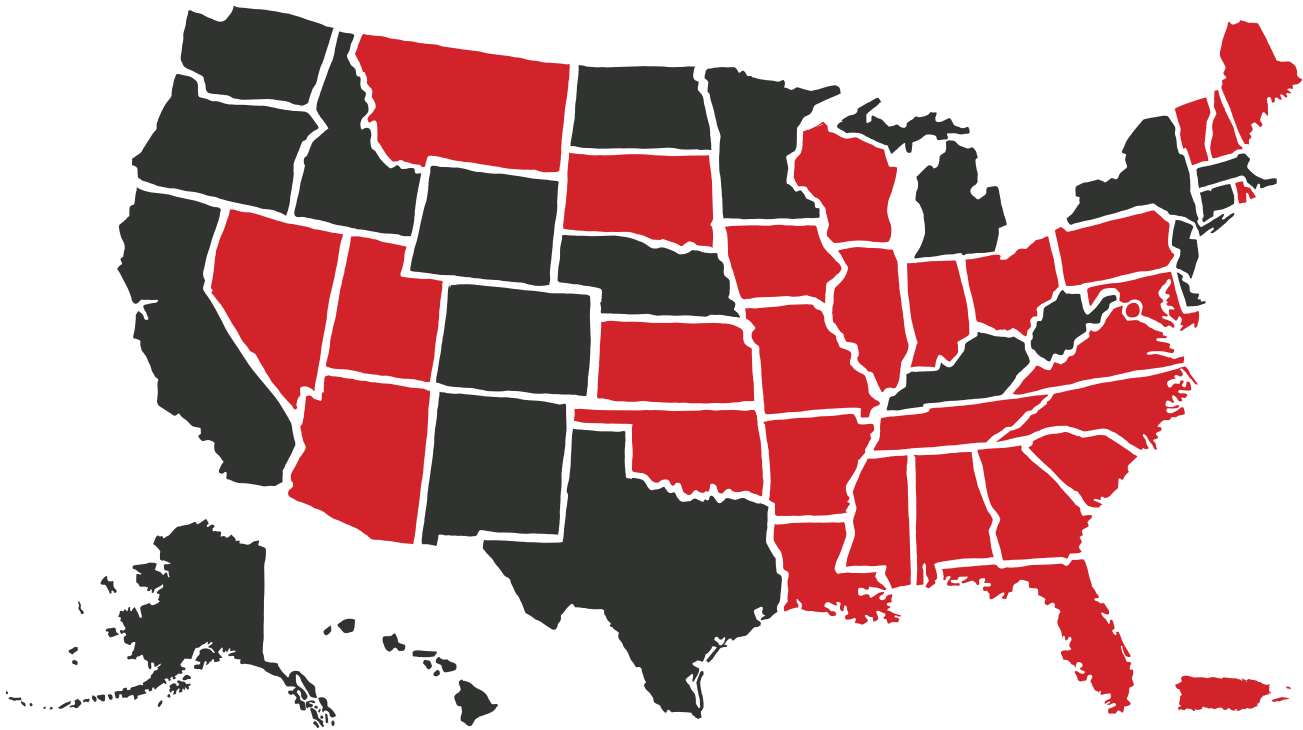
● States with laws that restrict instruction of “divisive” topics

[12 STATES]

Florida	North Dakota
Georgia	Oklahoma
Indiana	South Carolina
Iowa	South Dakota
Missouri	Tennessee
New Hampshire	Texas

NATIONAL ISSUE SUMMARY

School Voucher Laws



For decades, proponents of private and religious education have sought to divert public school funding to private education. The most successful of these efforts have been school voucher programs, which provide students with a sum of money in order to attend a private school. Some states instead create tax-credit scholarship programs, which achieve the same result by relying on third-party organizations to manage the vouchers.

While supporters of private schools would say that they result in better academic outcomes, there is little evidence to support this conclusion. Instead, these programs drain critical funds from public education, reinforce structural inequalities, and undermine religious freedom. Research shows that approximately 78% of private school students attend religious schools. However, because most voucher programs are not sufficient to cover the cost of secular private schools, students accepting vouchers are disproportionately likely to attend religious schools. Although this is clearly taxpayer funding being used for an inherently religious purpose, the U.S. Supreme Court has justified voucher programs because the parents receiving the vouchers make an independent choice about where to send the money.

Voucher proponents have long seen state constitutional “no aid” clauses, which prevent the state from using public funds for religious education, as barriers to voucher programs. However, after the Supreme Court’s *Espinoza v. Montana Dept. of Revenue* (2020) decision, these constitutional protections may not be used to prevent funding of religious schools. Therefore, we are likely to see renewed efforts by voucher advocates to create new programs and weaken public schools by shifting increasingly large amounts of taxpayer funding to private, religious schools.

● States with laws that allow school vouchers or tax-credit scholarships

[29 STATES + DC & PUERTO RICO]

Alabama	North Carolina
Arizona	Nevada
Arkansas	New Hampshire
DC	Ohio
Florida	Oklahoma
Georgia	Pennsylvania
Illinois	Puerto Rico
Indiana	Rhode Island
Iowa	South Carolina
Kansas	South Dakota
Louisiana	Tennessee
Maryland	Utah
Maine	Virginia
Mississippi	Vermont
Missouri	Wisconsin
Montana	

Issue Analysis & Categorization

This report analyzes four categories of public policy in each state that affect religious equality and the separation of religion and government: Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections, Special Privileges for Religion, Health Care & Wellness, and Education & Youth. Within each category, laws and policies that positively and negatively impact religious equality are listed along with a brief explanation of the topic.

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for freedom of religion created by the U.S. Constitution. These protections form the bedrock of our religious freedom by ensuring both that everyone is entitled to their beliefs and that no one's beliefs are favored by the government. They are meant to ensure that the government treats everyone equally, regardless of their religion or if they reject religion altogether. Similarly, most states have passed nondiscrimination laws that prohibit discrimination based on protected characteristics, including religious beliefs or lack thereof.

POSITIVE LAWS & POLICIES

Establishment Clause and Free Exercise Clause

These items indicate whether the state constitution has a provision analogous to the First Amendment's Establishment Clause and Free Exercise Clause: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." Many state constitutions reiterate these important protections enshrined in the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. These clauses may be interpreted in accordance with federal precedent or state courts may interpret them to provide a greater level of protection than required under federal law.

Strong Taxpayer Standing

This item indicates whether the court systems in a state recognize standing for taxpayers to bring suit against unconstitutional

expenditures of state funds. Standing is a legal term that indicates whether someone is qualified to pursue a claim in court. When a state or local government exceeds the bounds of its constitution or the U.S. Constitution (by spending public money to endorse a religion, for example), generally the only way to prevent that expenditure is for individuals to bring suit in court.

At the federal level, there has been a gradual erosion of taxpayer standing, which may prevent individuals from suing the government in federal court. States, however, are not bound by this federal court precedent, and while some states have incorporated elements of federal standing doctrine into their jurisprudence, others use different approaches to ensure access to their state courts. Strong taxpayer standing allows citizens to challenge unconstitutional uses of taxpayer funds, including violations of the separation of religion and government.

Nondiscrimination Laws

This item indicates whether the state has nondiscrimination laws that prohibit discrimination on the basis of religion in various areas of the law, such as employment, housing, public accommodations, and education. The majority of states provide protection in at least some of these areas, and they typically cover a number of other protected characteristics such as race, color, sex, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, and disability. It is important to note that, while these nondiscrimination laws typically list "religion" or "creed" as protected characteristics, this category covers discrimination against atheists and nonreligious people as well as people with religious beliefs. Discrimination prohibited by these types of laws can take many forms, including failure to hire a person, failure to promote a person, taking adverse actions in the workplace against a person, failure to address harassment, refusal to admit or serve a person, or firing a person because of a protected characteristic.

Many nondiscrimination laws exempt religious organizations, either by excluding them from the definitions of covered organizations or by including a specific exemption. The U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that in some instances, places of worship and religious schools are entitled to be exempt from various labor laws, including employment nondiscrimination laws. This is called the “ministerial exemption” because it has generally applied to clergy and faith leaders. Similarly, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which federally prohibits employment discrimination, has an exemption for religious organizations: “This subchapter shall not apply... to a religious corporation, association, educational institution, or society with respect to the employment of individuals of a particular religion to perform work connected with the carrying on by such corporation, association, educational institution, or society of its activities.” However, some states have nondiscrimination laws that provide an even broader allowance for religious organizations to discriminate. If a state’s nondiscrimination law has exemptions that go beyond those in Title VII or the ministerial exemption, this item will indicate that the state has religious exemptions.

NEGATIVE LAWS & POLICIES

Religious Tests for Office

While the U.S. Constitution states that “no religious Test shall ever be required as a Qualification to any Office or public Trust under the United States,” this provision has not always been understood to apply to state offices. Consequently, several state constitutions require office-holders to swear a religious oath or require candidates to practice a specific religion. Others explicitly prohibit atheists or nonreligious people from holding office. It is generally understood that these provisions are unconstitutional and without effect, but they may remain in state law or the state constitution despite being voided by a court. This item indicates that these inactive provisions remain in the state constitution or state law.

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws that privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs. For example, nearly half of states have broad statutes that may allow religious individuals and organizations to avoid general legal requirements that burden their exercise of religion. Similarly, most states have created special privileges for religious organizations and places of worship, allowing them to avoid taxes or other legal requirements that apply to other types of nonprofit organizations.

Rather than enhancing religious freedom, these laws and policies undermine it. They often seek to enshrine a particular set of religious beliefs (such as those held by Christian nationalists) into the law by creating exceptions to specific legal requirements tailored to suit those groups.

For example, a state law may create a religious exemption to civil rights laws specifically for wedding service providers so that they are not required to serve same-sex couples. Alternately, the law may purport to protect individuals and businesses from discrimination because of their beliefs, but only to protect certain narrow beliefs, such as the belief that the only moral form of sexual intercourse is between heterosexual married couples. Although limited religious exemptions must be included in some laws in order for them to comply with the First Amendment’s Free Exercise Clause, the exemptions Christian nationalists seek are significantly broader, in some cases undermining the very purpose of the law.

POSITIVE LAWS & POLICIES

Limitations on Clergy Privilege

This item identifies state laws that limit clergy privilege to protect the safety and well-being of children. Clergy-penitent privilege is a right recognized in all 50 states that provides confidentiality for discussions between religious leaders and their followers. This privilege is most frequently referenced in the Catholic practice of confession, but it pertains to other religions as well. When it applies, this privilege generally prohibits any court from compelling testimony from a clergy member. Unfortunately, because the privilege is so broad, it can sometimes prevent the reporting of child abuse and lead to other negative outcomes.

A significant number of states seek to protect youth by making clergy mandatory reporters for suspected child abuse and neglect, like educators and health care providers. This means that if there is a reasonable cause for a clergy member to believe a child is being abused, they are required to report this suspicion to state authorities. A smaller number of states provide explicit exceptions to the clergy privilege concerning child abuse. This is important because, even with mandatory reporting, if communication is still privileged, it is difficult or impossible to investigate the situation or enforce the required reporting.

Secular Celebrants

States offer numerous options for solemnizing or officiating a marriage, but all-too-often these options exclude the possibility of a nonreligious or secular celebrant. States may disallow secular celebrants either by failing to include them in the statutory list of who may solemnize a wedding, which forces any

PARTNER PERSPECTIVE

Allowing Secular Celebrants Is a Matter of Equality for Nonreligious People

NICHOLAS LITTLE

Vice President and General Counsel, Center for Inquiry

Religious privilege is baked in to our society, and the nature of privilege is such that its beneficiaries rarely notice it. When privilege is challenged and removed, the previous beneficiaries will often cry foul and claim discrimination when all that is really happening is that others are being treated equally.

This is particularly the case for marriage, where religion and the secular state both have long term interests and involvement. During the fight for same-sex marriage rights, the opposition falsely claimed that marriage was primarily and originally a religious institution. Nonreligious people were in the forefront of those demanding the rights of same-sex couples to marry, and for good reason. Absent a legal right to marry, LGBTQ couples were denied access to almost 2,000 federal legal rights: from long term partners being denied access to sit beside the hospital bed of their dying lovers, to deportation of people (to theocracies that execute gay men) who were denied the right to marry their American citizen partner, to widowed partners cut off from benefits and faced with vast inheritance tax bills.

The *Obergefell v. Hodges* decision, which established the right across the U.S. to marry a person of the same sex, was a fundamental step forward in basic rights. But marriage as an institution in most states still carries elements of religious privilege. No longer only in who can get married, but also in who can solemnize a marriage. All states determine their own marriage laws, and this includes who may sign a marriage license, and thereby join the couple legally. All states permit religious ministers (of any faith or denomination) to serve such a role. States also permit secular officials, usually judges, mayors, and the like, to do so.

But there is a conspicuous omission here. The Center for Inquiry (CFI) trains secular celebrants to help nonreligious couples (or interfaith couples, or indeed anyone who wants a non-religious ceremony) celebrate or memorialize those family moments everyone has, regardless of religious belief, like weddings, funerals, and celebrations of new babies. Unfortunately, in most states, those individuals, despite being trained, cannot solemnize marriages. Why? Because we at CFI refuse to call them religious—because they simply aren't.

One can solemnize weddings across the country by receiving an online ordination from one of many religious options, such as the Universal Life Church, the Church of Body Modification, the Church of Bacon, or the Church of the Dude. These claim status as religious organizations, and therefore cannot be treated differently from other (more traditional) religions. But giving someone the ability to perform such a function only if they are religious unfairly privileges religion and discriminates against the nonbelievers.

So we sued. We sued first in Indiana, where we initially lost, but, on appeal to the Seventh Circuit, won an important victory recognizing that excluding trained secular celebrants violated the federal constitution. Since then, we've won the legal right to have secular celebrants perform marriages in the courts in Illinois and Michigan and by changing legislation in D.C. and Oregon. CFI is currently suing Texas and working in California and Virginia to amend their laws.

States often claim that nonreligious options exist, in the form of judges and clerks. And that's true. But the Seventh Circuit recognized that isn't equality. Nonbelievers can have the ceremony they want, but then must take an extra step to receive legal recognition at the courthouse. During this process, they may be faced with a state official who insists on including religious language against the couple's will in the ceremony. States can and must give nonreligious people the same rights as others to pick the celebrant they want at the place they want to do the service they want.

While this may not impact people lives as directly or severely as housing or workplace discrimination, it is just wrong and, more importantly, unconstitutional that the law treats nonreligious people differently when they seek to get married or to perform a marriage. As the population of non-believers continues to skyrocket, in particular among younger Americans who are more likely to be getting married, we will go on to seek equality in every state, so every couple who wants a secular celebrant can have one.

potential secular celebrant to register to temporarily perform marriages, or by placing religious restrictions on options such as self-officiation of marriages. This item indicates that there are state laws or court decisions that provide nonreligious couples equivalent marriage solemnization or officiation options to religious couples.

NEGATIVE LAWS & POLICIES

State Religious Freedom Restoration Acts

Based on U.S. Supreme Court precedent, the First Amendment's Free Exercise Clause does not limit the ability of the federal government to pass neutral laws that generally apply to everyone (or every relevant party), even if they incidentally burden religious exercise. The Court has noted that to do otherwise would allow individual religious belief to supersede the law of the land, resulting in an unworkable society where laws could not be applied evenly.

Despite this warning, Congress passed the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA) at the federal level, and a number of states have followed by passing their own version of this law. RFRA requires the government to meet a very difficult test whenever it burdens religious exercise—they must show that the reason for the government action is compelling and that the government used the least restrictive means to achieve that goal. In effect, this creates a widely applicable exemption that religious individuals and organizations can use to insulate themselves from state law by claiming that the state is infringing on their religious exercise.

Over time, as predicted by the Supreme Court, RFRA has been misused at both the state and federal levels to carve out exemptions that privilege particular religious viewpoints. Christian nationalists seek to apply these laws in new ways, such as undermining civil rights laws that protect LGBTQ people and women from discrimination. This item indicates that the state has a statute similar to the federal RFRA.

Religious Exemptions to Enforcement

This item assesses state laws that include religious exemptions to rules that otherwise apply to everyone else. Many of these religious exemptions are specifically sought by Christian nationalists because they align with their beliefs, and therefore the exemptions allow them to ignore provisions of law with which they disagree.

For example, several states allow religious foster care and adoption agencies that receive state funding to discriminate against potential parents and, in some states, even the vulnerable youth themselves, based on their beliefs. This most negatively impacts single people, LGBTQ people, atheists, and religious minorities.

These laws are especially harmful to foster youth because they reduce the number of qualified families, which in turn denies them the chance to find loving, permanent homes.

A handful of states have created exemptions to civil rights laws, allowing individuals and businesses to discriminate against same-sex couples based on their religious beliefs about marriage. Not surprisingly, in each case these states fail to provide any nondiscrimination protections for LGBTQ people in the first place. Regardless, these religious exemptions are stigmatizing and harmful, and they can override local nondiscrimination protections.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, a number of states passed exemptions that excuse religious organizations from being required to follow public health restrictions implemented during emergencies. These laws vary significantly. Some allow in-person gatherings so long as other precautionary rules are followed, while others completely eliminate the ability of the state to enforce public health rules on religious organizations, whether they relate to the pandemic or other emergencies. In a few states, lawmakers passed sweeping exemptions that shield religious organizations from civil and criminal liability, potentially even outside the context of public health emergencies. These laws are exceptionally dangerous as they could result in religious organizations, including schools, hospitals, and others, never being held accountable for wrongs they commit. It remains to be seen how courts will apply such broad exemptions.

Tax Exemptions for Places of Worship

Most states exempt churches and other places of worship, as well as other religious organizations and nonprofits, from various state taxes. However, this item indicates laws or policies that provide special tax exemptions or limited filing requirements for religious organizations or places of worship that are not available to secular nonprofits. For example, some states allow religious organizations or places of worship to omit initially filing for tax exemption, while others may exempt these organizations from filing an annual return. Without these important filings, it is impossible for the government to detect fraud and misconduct within the religious organizations to which it grants tax exemption.

Most states offer tax exemptions for parsonages or other dwellings provided to clergy, in effect subsidizing their housing. Such exemptions are not typically available to secular nonprofits. Although similar provisions exist in federal law, this item indicates exemptions from state-level taxes.

Nearly every state offers tax exemptions for property owned by religious organizations and places of worship, but such exemptions are not typically available to other nonprofits. In some

instances, these exemptions are granted automatically to places of worship, but only granted conditionally to other nonprofits or granted after a lengthy approval process.

Some states offer religious organizations and places of worship an exemption from state sales tax that is not available to other nonprofits. For example, these states may limit the types of nonprofits that can apply sales tax exemptions, or they might automatically approve religious organizations for these exemptions while requiring other types of nonprofits to apply for approval.

Anti-Blasphemy Laws

State anti-blasphemy laws were long ago ruled unconstitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court. The *Joseph Burstyn, Inc. v. Wilson* (1952) decision held that “[i]t is not the business of government in our nation to suppress real or imagined attacks upon a particular religious doctrine, whether they appear in publications, speeches, or motion pictures.” This item indicates that the state law still contains inactive anti-blasphemy provisions.

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious extremists and their lawmaker allies have sought to impose their beliefs through limitations on health care, targeting women’s health care in particular. After the *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization* (2022) decision, which overturned decades of precedent protecting access to abortion, Christian nationalists and their lawmakers allies are now able to fully legislate their regressive agenda, revoking civil rights that Americans had long thought secured.

Negative laws affecting health care generally relate to issues of paramount concern to religious conservatives: abortion, contraception, sterilization, end-of-life care, LGBTQ care, and faith healing. Moreover, as a result of the pandemic, vaccination issues have gained a higher profile. In addition to compromising the separation of religion and government, these intrusive laws and policies can have a drastically negative impact on people by limiting access to essential health care, especially for groups that already face discrimination or are otherwise vulnerable.

POSITIVE LAWS & POLICIES

Medical Aid-in-Dying Laws

This item indicates state laws that allow a terminally ill, mentally competent adult to request and obtain medication that brings about a peaceful death. Prohibitions on suicide, assisted suicide, and homicide do not apply to individuals taking appropriate actions in accordance with these laws.

NEGATIVE LAWS & POLICIES

Limitations on Access to Abortion

The U.S. Supreme Court’s decision in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization* overturned the protections for access to abortion first established by the Court 50 years ago in *Roe v. Wade* (1973). Subsequently, states controlled by Christian nationalist lawmakers are now able to strip what had previously been considered constitutional rights from citizens. This item examines laws that protect access to abortion and those that severely restrict or ban access to this care.

A number of states have established constitutional or statutory protections for abortion. For example, many states guarantee the right to abortion through their state constitutions, either directly or as part of the right to privacy or equal protection. While some states with constitutional protections for abortion have shown increasing hostility to abortion, those protections remain in place unless the state constitution is modified through a ballot measure or they are undermined by the state courts. In 2022, for example, citizens in Kansas choose not to repeal their constitutional protections for abortion access despite strong support from conservative lawmakers and leaders.

In addition, many states have enacted statutory protections for abortion. The protections can vary quite widely from those that merely codify the legal protections for abortion provided in *Roe v. Wade* to more comprehensive approaches. For example, the Reproductive Health Act passed by New York in 2019 decriminalized abortion, allowed qualified providers other than physicians to perform abortions, and reduced restrictions, such as the prohibition on third-trimester abortions (which are typically only done because of health risks resulting from pregnancy or the fetus is not viable).

In the weeks and months leading up to the *Dobbs* decision, several states passed what amounts to complete bans on abortion, and more states passed such bans soon thereafter. Other states have long had abortion bans that pre-date *Roe v. Wade*. While *Roe* rendered those laws inoperative, in at least some states lawmakers refused to repeal these measures, hoping that they could once again take effect once *Roe* was overturned. Now that this has happened, several of these states are taking action to reassert these laws. In addition, a number of states had passed trigger laws that would ban abortion to some extent if *Roe* were to be overturned. This item indicates state laws that effectively ban all or most abortions through any combination of these various statutes.

Lastly, in 2021, Texas passed SB 8, a unique anti-abortion bill that allows any Texas resident to bring suit against any person (except the pregnant individual) who they suspect performed or “aided or abetted” a prohibited abortion. This created a legal

system where anti-abortion activists can directly sue providers, and the law was so greatly stacked in their favor that abortion providers would likely be subject to ruinous liability. Even before the *Dobbs* decision, this private enforcement provision greatly limited the availability of abortion in Texas, however the U.S. Supreme Court threw out challenges to this dangerous new type of enforcement. Since the passage of SB 8 in Texas, a few other states have adopted similar provisions.

Denial of Care Laws

This item indicates laws and policies that allow religious providers (including individual health care workers and institutional providers like hospitals) to refrain from providing various types of health care that conflict with their religious beliefs. Sometimes called “freedom of conscience” laws or “religious refusals,” these provisions may effectively supersede rules of professional ethics, medical best practices, and protections against medical negligence in order to privilege the religious beliefs of providers. These laws most often allow providers to refuse services relating to abortion, contraception, and sterilization, but some states have even broader exemptions and many of the newer laws are squarely aimed at denying care to LGBTQ patients.

While many denial of care laws echo existing exemptions at the federal level, states may pass laws that apply exemptions more broadly or extend them to additional types of institutions, including those that do not receive federal funding. As indicated on each scorecard, many states have laws that allow various types of institutions to refuse to provide abortion services. States may also have laws that allow at least some health care providers to refuse to provide contraception and/or sterilization services.

Lastly, over the past few years several states have adopted extraordinarily broad denial of care laws that allow refusals of any type of care based on the purported religious, moral, or ethical beliefs of hospitals or providers. Generally, there is no requirement that the provider inform the patient that they are being denied care, and these laws make explicitly clear that providers are not required to refer patients to another provider for the needed care. These laws also apply to health care payers, including health insurance companies and self-insured employers, allowing them to also deny necessary care to patients and employees based on their purported religious, moral, or ethical beliefs. These provisions are ripe for abuse by payers seeking another avenue through which to deny coverage for care. Moreover, these laws also have provisions that exempt religious health facilities from the application of the law (in other words, they protect the beliefs of religious hospitals, but not the employees of those hospitals who might disagree), and some go further, exempting religious hospitals from any labor law that does not accord with their beliefs. Because of the incredible breadth of these denial of care laws, and the fact

that they firmly place the religious beliefs of the health facilities above the applicable standards of care or the best interests of patients, we are calling these extreme measures “religion-based health care” laws.

Child Negligence Exemptions for Faith Healing

This item indicates laws that carve holes into state law protections against child negligence or medical neglect, protecting individuals from legal consequences for the far-too-frequent tragic outcomes of faith healing imposed on minors. These laws typically protect the faith healers and parents or guardians from any penalties when a child dies or is severely harmed as a result of these practices or when a child is denied appropriate treatment for religious reasons. With these exemptions in place, law enforcement has limited ability to prosecute. State laws may include religious exemptions to civil liability, criminal laws, or both.

Nonmedical Exemptions to Vaccination

Every state has laws that require children to receive various vaccinations prior to attending public school. This item indicates that the state has nonmedical exemptions to those laws, which endanger young people and risk public health. Personal exemptions allow a parent to opt their child out of the vaccination requirement for basically any reason, which is often framed as a philosophy or belief. Religious exemptions allow a parent to opt their child out of the vaccination requirement based on their religious beliefs, which may or may not be associated with their particular denomination. There is evidence that those who seek to avoid vaccination will take advantage of either type of nonmedical exemption, depending on what is available under state law.

Education & Youth

Unfortunately, but unsurprisingly, the bulk of negative legislation sought by white Christian nationalists, such as those behind Project Blitz, targets schools and youth. Young people, particularly those who aren’t already being influenced by a church, can be an especially appealing target for religious and ideological indoctrination. Research shows that individuals raised within a particular religious faith are likely to remain in that faith as they age. Younger children are particularly vulnerable to peer pressure, as they are still in the process of identity development and have yet to fully develop their capacity for reason.

In recent years there has been significant advocacy by white Christian nationalists to pass legislation to convince young people that America was founded as a Christian nation, in order

to propagate this false version of history. These efforts seek to enshrine revisionist history into the law, conflate founding documents with religious ones, teach the bible in a devotional manner in schools, and require the display of religious messages and symbolism in schools. Especially over the last few years, there have been concerted efforts to censor school curriculums and to ban books from school libraries in order to prevent students from learning about and grappling with the complex history of race and oppression in the United States.

Moreover, because young people depend on the care of others, they are especially vulnerable to harms caused by the religious beliefs of their parents and caretakers. Sadly, religious beliefs are all too often used to justify conduct that can have a severely negative and lifelong impact on young people, including denial of medical care or dangerous practices like conversion therapy.

POSITIVE LAWS & POLICIES

Protection from Child Marriage

This item indicates laws that prohibit individuals below the age of majority (usually 18) from marrying. Because exceptions, such as those allowing parental consent, can be misused to force children to marry, we are only counting those laws which flatly prohibit the marriage of minors.

This issue is critically important because too frequently these marriages occur in religious sects where very young girls are forced to marry much older men. Child brides forced into marriage have few options. As minors, they face legal dead ends if they want to end their marriage. In states where their parents (or spouse) have custody rights, organizations and shelters are unable to interfere with those rights. As a result, these children have no legal avenues to escape an abusive family or husband. They are too often removed from school, raped, and forced to live in poverty. The only way to give child brides the legal right to say “no” to marriage is to prohibit marriage among minors altogether.

Protection from Conversion Therapy

This item indicates laws designed to protect LGBTQ youth from dangerous and discredited conversion therapy. Conversion therapy consists of a variety of harmful practices which falsely claim to change a person’s sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. These laws generally apply through licensing restrictions that prevent licensed medical and mental health providers from conducting conversion therapy on youth under the age of 18. Generally, however, these laws are unable to regulate conversion therapy that is provided by religious clergy because they are usually not licensed providers.

Sex Education

This item examines how state laws and policies affect the quality of sex education in each state’s public schools, which can and should play an important role in providing comprehensive and medically accurate sex education. Comprehensive sex education helps to foster healthy relationships and development, reduces the risk of unintended pregnancy, and lowers the risk of sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

Under this analysis, a state is considered to offer comprehensive sex education if school districts are required to offer such education and the curriculum covers a wide range of relevant issues beyond abstinence. A comprehensive curriculum generally teaches abstinence as the best method for avoiding STIs and unintended pregnancies while also teaching that contraception reduces the risk of unintended pregnancy and STIs, including HIV. Such programs should be inclusive and provide age-appropriate education about gender roles, sexual orientation, and gender identity. These programs also develop interpersonal and other communication skills and help young people explore their own values, goals, and options.

A state’s public school sex education curriculum is considered “abstinence only” if there are laws mandating that programs must exclusively or primarily promote abstinence from sexual activity outside of marriage. By doing so, these programs tell students that abstinence is an unmarried person’s only moral option. This category also includes “abstinence-plus” programs, which provide some information about contraception in the context of strong abstinence messages. Many abstinence only programs offered in schools based on these state laws incorporate religious elements or promote religious values in ways that conflict with the separation of religion and government.

Homeschooling Laws

This item provides an assessment of state laws that regulate homeschooling. Although homeschooling is not always a religious issue, it cannot be denied that religious groups have long dominated this issue area. Unfortunately, such organizations have worked to stymie any reasonable requirements for homeschooling or to ensure the safety and well-being of homeschooled students.

For this assessment, we examined state homeschooling laws to determine if there are a few minimal educational and safety requirements. First, we determined whether state law requires homeschooling instructors (whether parents or outside instructors) to meet any qualification requirements. This is critical to ensure that those teaching homeschooled students (usually, but not always, parents) are capable of providing quality instruction.

Second, we examined whether state law requires evaluation of homeschooled students’ academic progress at least

annually. Some states use standardized testing to measure progress, while other states require progress reports detailing what a child learned during a certain period of time. As part of this evaluation, we also looked for some type of remediation process so that efforts can be made to help homeschooled children when they fall behind.

Third, we examined whether state law protects children by disallowing homeschooling where an adult in the household has been convicted of certain crimes, such as homicide, aggravated assault, rape, or child abuse. Unfortunately, research has clearly shown that homeschooled children are at greater risk for abuse and neglect. Without basic protections in place, homeschooling can allow child abuse to go undetected because there can be a lack of contact with adults outside the home.

Finally, we looked at religious or other exemptions to homeschooling requirements. For example, some states exempt parents from homeschooling laws and oversight if the parents claim a religious objection to such requirements. This item also assesses broader limitations on oversight of homeschooling, such as state laws that explicitly prohibit any oversight of homeschooling by school districts.

NEGATIVE LAWS & POLICIES

School Censorship Laws

A number of states have passed laws that prohibit schools from teaching matters that the state deems “divisive,” “controversial,” or which may make students “feel guilty.” These attacks on the free speech of educators and the education of students have been pushed by groups that oppose teaching students accurate history about the civil rights struggles for racial equality and LGBTQ equality in the United States. Legislation in this area is often framed as being about parental rights, as protecting students from activism by teachers, or as school transparency measures. In fact, these bills censor curricula, ban books, persecute teachers, and undermine the rights of students to further the radical agenda of white Christian nationalist politicians.

This item indicates whether a state has passed a law that prohibits teachers in public schools or colleges from discussing topics defined by the state as divisive or controversial. For example, these bills may restrict discussion of racial oppression throughout American history, gender identity or sexual orientation, women’s issues, or other politicized topics. The language used in the bills is intentionally broad and vague, essentially tying the hands of teachers and administrators by putting them at risk for discipline, fines, or even permanent loss of license. Many of them purport to ban topics such as “Critical Race Theory,” even though the subject is only taught in high-level graduate courses. Others ban any discussion

that could potentially cause discomfort in students, such as structural racism or feminism. When passed, these laws have had a dramatically negative impact on school environments, frequently leading to book bans, firing and discipline of educators, censorship of curriculum, revocation of diversity and inclusive education programs, and stifling of student discussion.

Additionally, some states have laws that prohibit educators from discussing LGBTQ topics in school or mandate that such topics be presented negatively. Prior to 2022, these laws usually applied only to sex education, although they were frequently applied more broadly by school districts. Recently, however, some states have passed even broader prohibitions on discussion of sexual orientation and gender identity, often labeled as “don’t say gay laws.” While advocates for these laws contend that they are meant to prevent exposure of students to inappropriate sexual material, in fact they falsely conflate LGBTQ people and topics with sexuality. Unfortunately, these bills stigmatize LGBTQ students, limit their ability to access supportive resources, and have a negative impact on the school environment.

Lastly, we indicate states that allow parents to opt students out of any class with which they disagree for religious reasons. Many states have laws that allow students to opt out of sex education classes, and some require explicit parental permission or “opt-in” for these classes. However, this assessment goes beyond sex education to indicate opt-out from classes such as history or biology to which parents have religious objections.

Religious Daycare Exemption

This item indicates laws that exempt daycares that are operated by a church, ministry, or parochial school from obtaining necessary licenses, paying annual fees, or meeting other legal requirements that apply to secular daycare programs. While some states still require religious daycares to maintain standard health and safety requirements, others do not require any licensure or regulation whatsoever. These exemptions are harmful because the preferences given to religious daycares incentivize those programs and reduce the availability of nonreligious daycare programs, which are required to follow significantly more stringent rules. For example, secular daycares must maintain a license, be subject to inspections, staff training requirements, and required child-staff ratios, which may increase costs compared to the relatively unregulated religious programs. At the same time, the lack of these safeguards in religious daycares can result in abuse, fraud, and neglect.

Anti-Trans Youth Laws

Several states have considered bills that target trans children, or their parents and medical providers, generally based

on religious disapproval of trans identities. Although there is significant variation in these bills, those that have passed into law tend to either seek to prevent trans youth from accessing medical care or to exclude them from school athletics.

Displaying a fundamental lack of understanding of trans children, trans youth medical bans prevent trans youth from accessing the standards of necessary medical care that are backed by the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Medical Association, and other leading health authorities. Some of these bills go so far as to threaten parents with prosecution if they help their child receive the medical care recommended by the child's doctor. When lawmakers prohibit medical care based on their beliefs, they risk the safety of others and undermine their religious freedom. No one should have authority to put their religious beliefs before the health and well-being of others.

Trans children, like other students, deserve the opportunity to learn teamwork, sportsmanship, leadership, and self-discipline, and to build a sense of belonging with their peers through school athletics. Unfortunately, some states have passed legislation that prevents trans children from accessing school sports and related programs. These attacks on trans youth are rooted in religious disapproval rather than educational best practices. These bills are not about fairness — the overwhelming majority of trans youth, like most children, don't play at elite levels. Instead, these laws result in exclusion and isolate trans youth from their classmates.

Anti-Science / Anti-Evolution Laws

This item indicates laws that allow or require public school educators to present non-scientific religious doctrine as scientific fact, most often relating to evolution. For example, these laws may require public schools to teach about “controversies” in areas where religious doctrine conflicts with generally accepted science.

Bible Class Laws

This item indicates laws that require or encourage public schools to offer elective classes on the Christian bible as a historical or literary document. While it may be technically possible for a public school to offer a course on the bible that uses it solely for historical or literary purposes, studies have shown it is very challenging for schools to consistently teach the bible in a non-devotional manner. Instead, many schools that offer such courses purposefully use them to proselytize and engage students in religious activities. Note that the classes authorized by these bills differ significantly from comparative religion classes, which examine many different religious perspectives.

Mandatory National Motto Displays

This item indicates laws that require schools (and sometimes other public buildings) to display the national motto, “In God We Trust.” Some of these laws mandate the size, format, and location (requiring display, for example, in “every classroom” or “a prominent location”) of these displays, while others leave these details to the individual school or district. Some of these laws require that the displays be donated rather than paid for with taxpayer funds. An excellent example of Christian nationalist symbolism, these requirements have nothing to do with education, but rather are meant to inculcate the ahistorical belief that America was founded as a Christian nation and to reinforce the linkage of religious expression with American identity.

School Vouchers & Tax Credits

This item indicates whether state law establishes school voucher or tax credit programs. School vouchers divert taxpayer funding from public education to private educational institutions, the majority of which are religious. Many states have laws that either create statewide school voucher or pilot voucher programs. Alternatively, some states have tax credit programs that create a more complex process to achieve the same result. States with these programs give tax credits to individuals who donate to third party scholarship organizations. These organizations then give students vouchers to attend private, usually religious, schools. So, in effect, these programs are subsidized by the state.

School Prayer Laws

This item indicates state laws that allow schools to improperly promote religious activities. For example, this includes state laws that allow school staff to participate in religious activities with students on school grounds or facilities during school hours. Courts have made clear that the First Amendment prohibits school staff from promoting religion or engaging in religious expression with students because this is religiously coercive. Despite recent U.S. Supreme Court decisions in this area, schools can and must limit religious expression by teachers when interacting with students as part of their teaching activities.

This assessment also includes laws that promote the exercise of religion by students in ways that are discriminatory toward other students or disruptive to the educational environment. The First Amendment guarantees students the right to engage in religious activities in schools to the same extent students can engage in secular expressive activities. At the same time, schools may set reasonable time, place, and manner restrictions on these activities. However, some states have passed laws that grant religious students special privileges or allow religious expression that harasses other students.

PARTNER PERSPECTIVE

Advancing God's Kingdom Through School Choice

CAROL CORBETT BURRIS

Executive Director, Network for Public Education

Libertarian economist Milton Friedman proposed the idea of school choice via vouchers in 1955. Friedman believed that the free market should direct schooling (and just about everything else). He believed that Social Security should be shut down because it created welfare dependency, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) should be eliminated, and the licensing of doctors should be abolished.

In this video entitled “The Enemies of School Choice,” Friedman claims that if parents were given vouchers to spend on any public or private school, school choice “would solve all of the critical problems” in education. According to Friedman, vouchers would eliminate discipline problems and reduce segregation. He presented no evidence, just claims based on his disdain for any government regulation. He dubbed public schools “government schools,” a term recently revived by both the far right and the religious right. His ultimate goal, which I believe is shared by contemporary school choice leaders, was to eliminate compulsory schooling, thus eliminating the public funding of K-12 education.

Others, most notably former Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos and her husband Richard, embraced school choice not only as means to achieve the goals of libertarianism but also to “advance God’s kingdom” by allowing public dollars to pay tuition to religious schools. The present Supreme Court has helped their cause with two decisions regarding voucher programs.

In 2020, *Espinoza v. Montana Department of Revenue* overturned that state’s constitutional ban on voucher tax-credit funding to faith-based private schools. The Montana program provides a 100% tax credit for taxpayers who contribute to a “scholarship fund,” which then funnels the money to families for private school tuition.

This summer, the court overturned a similar prohibition in Maine with its decision in *Carson v. Makin*. Maine, along with Vermont and New Hampshire, has a town tuition program that assists families with tuition payments if they live in rural areas that do not have a public secondary school. The Court ruled that the program must be open to all private schools, including religious schools. The payment of tuition to schools that teach religion had previously been banned.

As evidenced above, vouchers take various forms—traditional tuition vouchers, tax credit scholarships, and payments to parents on debit cards (Educational Savings Accounts). Some states have several varieties, and, in some cases, they allow parents to combine programs. Whatever form they take, all must now subsidize tuition to religious schools, including the federally funded voucher program mandated by Congress for Washington, D.C.

Nearly all (81%) states with voucher programs allow religious enrollment discrimination in voucher schools, and 74% allow enrollment discrimination based on the LGBTQ status of students and/or families. Florida’s Grace Christian School, which participates in four of the five Florida voucher programs, has made it clear that any student who engages in “gay or transgender lifestyles” will be required to leave. The Network for Public Education’s 2022 report, *Public Schooling in America: Measuring Each State’s Commitment to Democratically Governed Schools*, provides an in-depth look at voucher programs, their impact, and their irresponsible and discriminatory practices.

“Advancing God’s Kingdom” through taxpayer funding of religious schools is not limited to voucher programs. Former parochial schools are turning themselves into charter schools, which are taxpayer-funded schools governed by private boards. One example is the Brilla charter chain run by Seton Education Partners, a nonprofit named after a Catholic saint. While the chain also runs private Catholic schools, their public charters offer optional onsite religious education when the school day closes.

The Hebrew language charter schools use a similar tactic. Secular instruction during the official school day (which includes mandatory classes in Hebrew), often in religious buildings, is followed by religious instruction at the day’s end.

The Community Public Charter in North Carolina is located on the grounds of its landlord, the Community Pentecostal Center. The school was started by the Reverend Eddie McGinnis, who serves as the Senior Pastor of the Church. Until recently, the website of the Pentecostal Center listed the charter school as one of its ministries, even providing a link for students to enroll.

Scholar and attorney Kevin Welner of the University of Colorado warns that the *Carson v. Makin* ruling opened the door to religious organizations directly running charter schools as well as the possibility of religious charter schools. And ESA voucher programs, which combine few regulations with large sums of money that can pay nearly the full cost of tuition, are now the most favored programs of the acolytes of Friedman.

As school choice grows under the eye of a Court with nothing but disdain for church and state separation, troubling days indeed are ahead. One can imagine small communities where public schools shutter as funding is drained by “choice” alternatives. In such places, the only “choice” left could be a religious school—and for many families, that would leave no choice at all.

Released Time Laws

Some state laws require or allow school districts to provide “released time” for students to attend private religious education. To meet constitutional requirements, this religious instruction must be outside school grounds, the school may not encourage participation, and school resources may not be spent to facilitate this religious education. Unfortunately, these released time programs may compromise the education of both participating and non-participating students if they detract from class time. While most laws establishing released time are permissive, meaning they allow school districts to set their own released time policies, at least one state has a mandatory released time law that places requirements on school districts. This item indicates state laws that allow or require released time policies and also laws that allow students to receive academic credit for religious education classes taught outside of school grounds.

Campus License to Discriminate Laws

This item indicates state laws that prevent public colleges and universities from applying nondiscrimination policies to religious student organizations. The majority of public colleges and universities have nondiscrimination policies that allow students to participate in any recognized student organization, and most colleges and universities collect a fee from students that is provided to student organizations in order to support their programming.

The U.S. Supreme Court has made clear that public colleges and universities must treat student organizations equally with respect to recognition and funding—they cannot discriminate based on viewpoint—but they may impose universal requirements such as nondiscrimination policies. These policies are important because they ensure that students are not forced to pay for student organizations in which they are not allowed to participate.

However, some states have Campus License to Discriminate laws that require public colleges and universities to both recognize religious student organizations and to allow them to discriminate by excluding some students based on the organization’s religious beliefs. Religious groups may advocate for these laws so that they can exclude students of other religions, nonreligious students, or other groups they disfavor, such as LGBTQ people.

There have been some legal developments in this area because the Trump Administration released regulations requiring all public colleges and universities to both recognize religious groups and also allow them to discriminate. American Atheists is currently suing the U.S. Department of Education to challenge this discriminatory rule, and the Department has indicated it will rescind or modify the rule.

Acknowledging Context

Research Process

Each scorecard assesses the presence or absence of state-wide laws and policies affecting the separation of religion and government, either positively or negatively. In addition to the 50 states, scorecards are provided for the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. Research for this project was conducted by the lawyers and law clerks at the American Atheists Legal Center, based on established criteria for each law and policy item, and compiled into a scorecard for each state. This research was drawn from publicly available sources.

The evaluations of each law and policy item are based on the nature of the item, typical statewide laws and policies concerning that issue, and our determination about best practices for that issue. States are grouped into one of the three general categories based on a subjective analysis of their laws. During the course of researching and drafting this report, a number of states passed relevant laws or policies. This report includes assessments of laws and policies passed as of November 1, 2022.

“Clauses” refer to state constitutional provisions. “Laws” refer to state statutes, either passed through a state’s legislative process or through referendum. “Policies” refer to administrative regulations and policies from a state executive agency that have a legal effect. “Court decisions” refer to final rulings by a relevant state or federal court with a statewide jurisdiction and for which the decision is controlling law.

Implementation of Laws & Policies

The State of the Secular States report is an assessment of state-wide laws and policies that affect the separation of religion and government in each state as well as the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. This report is intended to support advocacy on these issues, both by providing a benchmark for existing laws and policies and a roadmap for how advocates can work to preserve the separation of religion and government in their own communities and states. However, this report is not an evaluation of statewide advocacy efforts. We recognize that state advocacy relating to the separation of religion and government and religious equality varies widely in different regions and is affected by state politics, historical context, legislative concerns, state constitutions, and countless other factors.

Moreover, this report does not measure the implementation of laws and policies that affect the separation of religion and government. It reviews only the presence or absence of the listed law and policy items. For example, we note on Michigan’s scorecard that the state applies religious exemptions to foster care and adoption, even though there is currently litigation regarding the scope of that exemption. Similarly, we note that several state constitutions include a religious test for public office, even though those provisions are not currently operative. Particularly in rapidly developing areas of law, such as limitations on health care for trans youth and prohibitions on abortion, scorecards may not convey the reality of whether the law is actively enforced or stayed by a court.

Future Categories

This report differs from the previous edition in that it includes additional criteria as well as some modified assessments of previous criteria. We intend to continue to iterate upon this report annually in order to provide a useful resource for advocates and lawmakers. Some issues we are considering for future inclusion are:

- Laws mandating recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance in schools
- Restrictions on hospital mergers
- Religion in state-required oaths
- Separation of religion and government in prison, re-entry, and recovery programs
- Laws that require health care facilities to disclose denial of care
- Protections for health care professionals who provide care that is criminalized in other states
- Laws restricting private businesses from requiring vaccination

PARTNER PERSPECTIVE

Twelve Step Programs Are Not a Legitimate Treatment for Nonreligious People

DARREL RAY, ED.D.

President, Recovering from Religion

Twelve step programs, such as Alcoholics Anonymous, are religion disguised as treatment. Eight of the twelve steps directly refer to religious concepts like Higher Power or God. What is worse, twelve step programs also preach and encourage practices that are demonstrably harmful, like convincing people that they are helpless and need supernatural help to overcome their addiction, rather than teaching valid and viable skills for coping with substance abuse. In another example, Alcoholics Anonymous materials promote the idea that addiction is a progressive disease that will eventually kill you, even though there is no evidence for this claim. Many twelve step programs also counsel against medically assisted treatment, which can be critical for individuals facing serious addictions who may suffer from severe withdrawal symptoms. In its 80+ year history, there has never been a large, peer-reviewed study that demonstrated the efficacy of Alcoholics Anonymous. At the same time, there have been many large and small, peer-reviewed studies showing that methods like harm reduction or cognitive behavioral therapy have measurable, positive effects on drug use and relapse. Organizations that use those methods, like SMART Recovery, Secular Organizations for Sobriety (SOS), and Moderation Management, have been around for many years, yet they are often ignored by court and prison officials in favor of only twelve step approaches.

Our legal system was captured by the twelve step religion of Alcoholics Anonymous decades ago, despite the fact that several courts have made clear that these programs are religious and cannot be imposed upon nonreligious people coercively. Twelve step programs have been presented to the legal system as a treatment for addictions of all kinds, when there is no actual scientific evidence for their efficacy. In other words, people have been forced by the courts to accept the care and treatment of these programs without being offered evidence-based options. Let me be clear, there is plenty of anecdotal testimony that twelve step programs help people with addictions, but anecdotes are not scientific evidence. There are plenty of anecdotal stories for demons, witches, and UFOs, but we don't count that as evidence either. Too many courts and prison officials have swallowed the twelve step dogma for too long,

to the detriment of hundreds of thousands of people, including many religious people, who would benefit from science-based help. Real treatment is not based on supernatural notions and unfounded claims of helplessness to resist addiction.

Although it is good that some courts have recognized that nonreligious people shouldn't be subject to religious coercion in twelve step programs, it is not enough that there is sometimes accommodation for those who are secular. This implies that treatment for nonreligious folks is something that needs to be tailored to accommodate their lack of a god belief. Why are Alcoholics Anonymous and similar programs the default choice of the courts? These programs discourage self-efficacy and push irrational thinking. The default in our court systems should be treatment that is supported by the latest research and shown to be the most effective. Anything other than evidence-based treatment risks further harm. All people dealing with substance-use disorders, whether religious or not, would benefit from secular, evidence-based treatment. Instead of twelve step programs, this should be the courts' default option.

Real treatment is based on the best scientific evidence. With the current state of psychology and psychotherapy, several well-developed and demonstrably useful treatments for addictions are available. There is no reason for our courts to impose a supernatural system of treatment on anyone—especially on nonreligious people.

The leadership of The Secular Therapy Project and Recovering from Religion applaud the New York State Legislature for recently enacting legislation to ensure that nonreligious people are given secular treatment options when court-mandated treatment programs are considered. In the future we hope to see other states follow this example and require state courts to offer secular options to those dealing with substance abuse. Using scientifically proven methods will save lives and reduce relapses. Substance abuse is a serious problem in our society, and it should be treated with proven techniques that help people overcome addiction while dealing with the underlying issues that may have led to the substance abuse in the first place.

State Assessment Categories

This report identifies four areas of public policy in each state that affect religious equality: Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections, Education & Youth, Health Care & Wellness, and Special Privileges for Religion. We assess more than 50 related law and policy measures in each state as well as Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia. The states have been grouped into three broad categories, but they have not been individually ranked.

Strong Protections for Religious Equality

In addition to strong constitutional protections that protect the separation of religion and government, states in this category have laws and policies that protect individuals from religion-based harm, such as child marriage or conversion therapy. Generally, these states allow few religious exemptions or special privileges for religion.

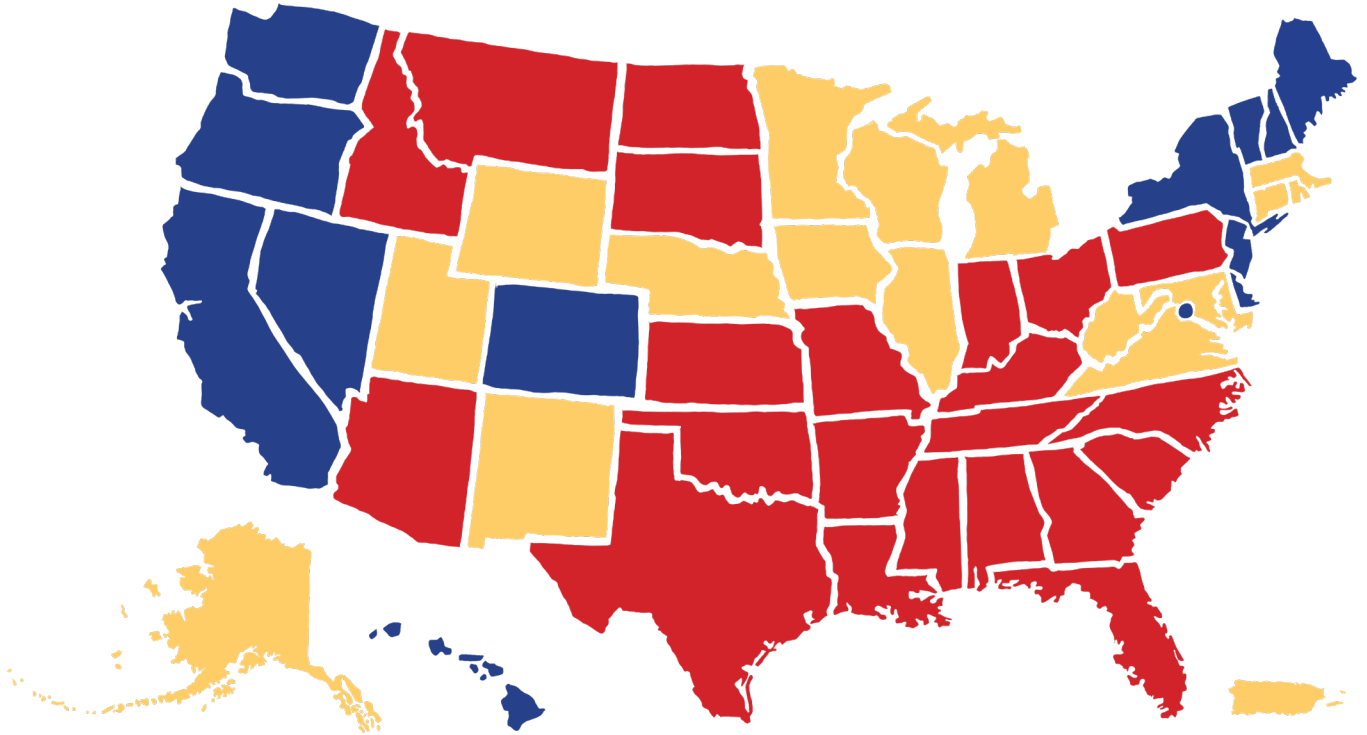
Basic Separation of Religion and Government

States in this category may have constitutional provisions that protect religious equality by ensuring the separation of religion and government, but they have few laws to protect individuals from religion-based harm. These states generally have at least some religious exemptions or special privileges for religion.

Religious Exemptions That Undermine Equality

States in this category have several laws that establish religious exemptions or special privileges for religion and provide few protections for the separation of religion and government. Some of these states have passed laws to promote false Christian nationalist narratives, to allow religious exemptions to civil rights protections, or to enshrine particular religious views into the law.

National Summary Map



Strong Protections for Religious Equality

[13 STATES & TERRITORIES]

- California
- Colorado
- Delaware
- DC
- Hawaii
- Maine
- Nevada
- New Hampshire
- New Jersey
- New York
- Oregon
- Vermont
- Washington



Religious Exemptions That Undermine Equality

[22 STATES]

- Alabama
- Arizona
- Arkansas
- Florida
- Georgia
- Idaho
- Indiana
- Kansas
- Kentucky
- Louisiana
- Mississippi
- Missouri
- Montana
- North Carolina
- North Dakota
- Ohio
- Oklahoma
- Pennsylvania
- South Carolina
- South Dakota
- Tennessee
- Texas



Basic Separation of Religion and Government

[17 STATES & TERRITORIES]

- Alaska
- Connecticut
- Illinois
- Iowa
- Maryland
- Massachusetts
- Michigan
- Minnesota
- Nebraska
- New Mexico
- Puerto Rico
- Rhode Island
- Utah
- Virginia
- West Virginia
- Wisconsin
- Wyoming

National Summary

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲ 40
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲ 50
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲ 22
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲ 50
Housing	▲ 51
Public Accommodations	▲ 47
Education	▲ 31
Religious Exemptions	▼ 26
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼ 7

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲ 34
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲ 14
SECULAR CELEBRANTS	▲ 6
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼ 23
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼ 12
Marriage-Related Services	▼ 2
Public Health Protections	▼ 13
Broad Liability Shield	▼ 4
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼ 16
Parsonage Exemption	▼ 38
Property Tax Exemption	▼ 49
Sales Tax Exemption	▼ 21
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼ 6

KEY	▲ Positive provision	Number Indicates total number of state and territories with provision in place.
	▼ Negative provision	

The State of the Secular States (2022) report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲ 10
ACCESS TO ABORTION	
Constitutional or Statutory Protections	▲ 25
Statutory Abortion Ban	▼ 24
Private Enforcement Provisions	▼ 3
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Refusals Related to Abortion	▼ 46
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼ 18
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼ 20
Religion-Based Health Care Law	▼ 5
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	▼ 41
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼ 46

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by Christian nationalists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲ 6
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲ 21
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲ 7
Abstinence Only Programs	▼ 27
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲ 12
Testing & Evaluation	▲ 12
Child Abuse Prevention	▲ 2
Exemptions	▼ 13
SCHOOL CENSORSHIP LAWS	
Divisive Topics Restricted	▼ 12
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼ 7
Religious Opt-Outs	▼ 2
RELIGIOUS DAYCARE EXEMPTION	▼ 29
ANTI-TRANS YOUTH LAWS	
Medical Ban	▼ 4
Athlete Ban	▼ 18
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼ 4
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼ 10
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼ 11
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼ 31
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼ 14
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼ 27
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼ 6
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼ 15

Alabama

RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS THAT UNDERMINE EQUALITY

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
SECULAR CELEBRANTS	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
Public Health Protections	▼
Broad Liability Shield	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
ACCESS TO ABORTION	
Constitutional or Statutory Protections	▲
Statutory Abortion Ban	▼
Private Enforcement Provisions	▼
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Refusals Related to Abortion	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Religion-Based Health Care Law	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by Christian nationalists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
SCHOOL CENSORSHIP LAWS	
Divisive Topics Restricted	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
Religious Opt-Outs	▼
RELIGIOUS DAYCARE EXEMPTION	▼
ANTI-TRANS YOUTH LAWS	
Medical Ban	▼
Athlete Ban	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The State of the Secular States (2022) report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Alaska

BASIC SEPARATION OF RELIGION AND GOVERNMENT

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
SECULAR CELEBRANTS	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
Public Health Protections	▼
Broad Liability Shield	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The State of the Secular States (2022) report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
ACCESS TO ABORTION	
Constitutional or Statutory Protections	▲
Statutory Abortion Ban	▼
Private Enforcement Provisions	▼
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Refusals Related to Abortion	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Religion-Based Health Care Law	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by Christian nationalists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
SCHOOL CENSORSHIP LAWS	
Divisive Topics Restricted	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
Religious Opt-Outs	▼
RELIGIOUS DAYCARE EXEMPTION	▼
ANTI-TRANS YOUTH LAWS	
Medical Ban	▼
Athlete Ban	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼

Arizona

RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS THAT UNDERMINE EQUALITY

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
SECULAR CELEBRANTS	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
Public Health Protections	▼
Broad Liability Shield	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
ACCESS TO ABORTION	
Constitutional or Statutory Protections	▲
Statutory Abortion Ban	▼
Private Enforcement Provisions	▼
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Refusals Related to Abortion	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Religion-Based Health Care Law	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by Christian nationalists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
SCHOOL CENSORSHIP LAWS	
Divisive Topics Restricted	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
Religious Opt-Outs	▼
RELIGIOUS DAYCARE EXEMPTION	▼
ANTI-TRANS YOUTH LAWS	
Medical Ban	▼
Athlete Ban	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The State of the Secular States (2022) report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Arkansas

RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS THAT UNDERMINE EQUALITY

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
SECULAR CELEBRANTS	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
Public Health Protections	▼
Broad Liability Shield	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	△ Positive provision not in place	▽ Negative provision not in place

The State of the Secular States (2022) report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	△
ACCESS TO ABORTION	
Constitutional or Statutory Protections	△
Statutory Abortion Ban	▼
Private Enforcement Provisions	▼
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Refusals Related to Abortion	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Religion-Based Health Care Law	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by Christian nationalists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	△
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	△
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	△
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	△
Testing & Evaluation	△
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
SCHOOL CENSORSHIP LAWS	
Divisive Topics Restricted	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
Religious Opt-Outs	▼
RELIGIOUS DAYCARE EXEMPTION	▼
ANTI-TRANS YOUTH LAWS	
Medical Ban	▼
Athlete Ban	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼

California

STRONG PROTECTIONS FOR RELIGIOUS EQUALITY

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
SECULAR CELEBRANTS	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
Public Health Protections	▼
Broad Liability Shield	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	△ Positive provision not in place	▽ Negative provision not in place

The State of the Secular States (2022) report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
ACCESS TO ABORTION	
Constitutional or Statutory Protections	▲
Statutory Abortion Ban	▼
Private Enforcement Provisions	▼
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Refusals Related to Abortion	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Religion-Based Health Care Law	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by Christian nationalists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	△
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	△
Testing & Evaluation	△
Child Abuse Prevention	△
Exemptions	▼
SCHOOL CENSORSHIP LAWS	
Divisive Topics Restricted	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
Religious Opt-Outs	▼
RELIGIOUS DAYCARE EXEMPTION	▼
ANTI-TRANS YOUTH LAWS	
Medical Ban	▼
Athlete Ban	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼

Colorado

STRONG PROTECTIONS FOR RELIGIOUS EQUALITY

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
SECULAR CELEBRANTS	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
Public Health Protections	▼
Broad Liability Shield	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	△ Positive provision not in place	▽ Negative provision not in place

The State of the Secular States (2022) report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
ACCESS TO ABORTION	
Constitutional or Statutory Protections	▲
Statutory Abortion Ban	▼
Private Enforcement Provisions	▼
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Refusals Related to Abortion	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Religion-Based Health Care Law	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by Christian nationalists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
SCHOOL CENSORSHIP LAWS	
Divisive Topics Restricted	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
Religious Opt-Outs	▼
RELIGIOUS DAYCARE EXEMPTION	▼
ANTI-TRANS YOUTH LAWS	
Medical Ban	▼
Athlete Ban	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼

Connecticut

BASIC SEPARATION OF RELIGION AND GOVERNMENT

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
SECULAR CELEBRANTS	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
Public Health Protections	▼
Broad Liability Shield	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The State of the Secular States (2022) report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
ACCESS TO ABORTION	
Constitutional or Statutory Protections	▲
Statutory Abortion Ban	▼
Private Enforcement Provisions	▼
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Refusals Related to Abortion	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Religion-Based Health Care Law	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by Christian nationalists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
SCHOOL CENSORSHIP LAWS	
Divisive Topics Restricted	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
Religious Opt-Outs	▼
RELIGIOUS DAYCARE EXEMPTION	▼
ANTI-TRANS YOUTH LAWS	
Medical Ban	▼
Athlete Ban	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼

Delaware

STRONG PROTECTIONS FOR RELIGIOUS EQUALITY

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE



STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE



STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING



NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS

Employment



Housing



Public Accommodations



Education



Religious Exemptions



RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE



Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE

Mandatory Reporting



Exceptions for Child Abuse



SECULAR CELEBRANTS



STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT



RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT

Foster Care & Adoption



Marriage-Related Services



Public Health Protections



Broad Liability Shield



TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP

Limited Filing Requirements



Parsonage Exemption



Property Tax Exemption



Sales Tax Exemption



ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW



KEY	Positive provision in place	Negative provision in place
	Positive provision not in place	Negative provision not in place

The State of the Secular States (2022) report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW



ACCESS TO ABORTION

Constitutional or Statutory Protections



Statutory Abortion Ban



Private Enforcement Provisions



DENIAL OF CARE LAWS

Refusals Related to Abortion



Refusals Related to Contraception



Refusals Related to Sterilization



Religion-Based Health Care Law



CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING



NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION



Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by Christian nationalists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE



PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY



SEX EDUCATION

Comprehensive Sex Education



Abstinence Only Programs



HOMESCHOOLING LAWS

Instructor Qualifications



Testing & Evaluation



Child Abuse Prevention



Exemptions



SCHOOL CENSORSHIP LAWS

Divisive Topics Restricted



LGBTQ Topics Restricted



Religious Opt-Outs



RELIGIOUS DAYCARE EXEMPTION



ANTI-TRANS YOUTH LAWS

Medical Ban



Athlete Ban



ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW



BIBLE CLASS LAW



MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS



SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS



SCHOOL PRAYER LAW



RELEASED TIME LAWS

Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies



Academic Credit for Religious Education



CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW



STRONG PROTECTIONS FOR RELIGIOUS EQUALITY

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	N/A
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	N/A
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
SECULAR CELEBRANTS	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
Public Health Protections	▼
Broad Liability Shield	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	△ Positive provision not in place	▽ Negative provision not in place

The State of the Secular States (2022) report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
ACCESS TO ABORTION	
Constitutional or Statutory Protections	▲
Statutory Abortion Ban	▼
Private Enforcement Provisions	▼
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Refusals Related to Abortion	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Religion-Based Health Care Law	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by Christian nationalists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
SCHOOL CENSORSHIP LAWS	
Divisive Topics Restricted	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
Religious Opt-Outs	▼
RELIGIOUS DAYCARE EXEMPTION	▼
ANTI-TRANS YOUTH LAWS	
Medical Ban	▼
Athlete Ban	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼

Florida

RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS THAT UNDERMINE EQUALITY

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
SECULAR CELEBRANTS	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
Public Health Protections	▼
Broad Liability Shield	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The State of the Secular States (2022) report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
ACCESS TO ABORTION	
Constitutional or Statutory Protections	▲
Statutory Abortion Ban	▼
Private Enforcement Provisions	▼
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Refusals Related to Abortion	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Religion-Based Health Care Law	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by Christian nationalists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
SCHOOL CENSORSHIP LAWS	
Divisive Topics Restricted	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
Religious Opt-Outs	▼
RELIGIOUS DAYCARE EXEMPTION	▼
ANTI-TRANS YOUTH LAWS	
Medical Ban	▼
Athlete Ban	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼

Georgia

RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS THAT UNDERMINE EQUALITY

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
SECULAR CELEBRANTS	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
Public Health Protections	▼
Broad Liability Shield	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The State of the Secular States (2022) report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
ACCESS TO ABORTION	
Constitutional or Statutory Protections	▲
Statutory Abortion Ban	▼
Private Enforcement Provisions	▼
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Refusals Related to Abortion	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Religion-Based Health Care Law	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by Christian nationalists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
SCHOOL CENSORSHIP LAWS	
Divisive Topics Restricted	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
Religious Opt-Outs	▼
RELIGIOUS DAYCARE EXEMPTION	▼
ANTI-TRANS YOUTH LAWS	
Medical Ban	▼
Athlete Ban	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼

Hawaii

STRONG PROTECTIONS FOR RELIGIOUS EQUALITY

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
SECULAR CELEBRANTS	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
Public Health Protections	▼
Broad Liability Shield	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	△ Positive provision not in place	▽ Negative provision not in place

The State of the Secular States (2022) report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
ACCESS TO ABORTION	
Constitutional or Statutory Protections	▲
Statutory Abortion Ban	▼
Private Enforcement Provisions	▼
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Refusals Related to Abortion	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Religion-Based Health Care Law	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by Christian nationalists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
SCHOOL CENSORSHIP LAWS	
Divisive Topics Restricted	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
Religious Opt-Outs	▼
RELIGIOUS DAYCARE EXEMPTION	▼
ANTI-TRANS YOUTH LAWS	
Medical Ban	▼
Athlete Ban	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼

Idaho

RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS THAT UNDERMINE EQUALITY

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
SECULAR CELEBRANTS	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
Public Health Protections	▼
Broad Liability Shield	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The State of the Secular States (2022) report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
ACCESS TO ABORTION	
Constitutional or Statutory Protections	▲
Statutory Abortion Ban	▼
Private Enforcement Provisions	▼
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Refusals Related to Abortion	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Religion-Based Health Care Law	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by Christian nationalists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
SCHOOL CENSORSHIP LAWS	
Divisive Topics Restricted	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
Religious Opt-Outs	▼
RELIGIOUS DAYCARE EXEMPTION	▼
ANTI-TRANS YOUTH LAWS	
Medical Ban	▼
Athlete Ban	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼

Illinois

BASIC SEPARATION OF RELIGION AND GOVERNMENT

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE



STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE



STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING



NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS

Employment



Housing



Public Accommodations



Education



Religious Exemptions



RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE



Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE

Mandatory Reporting



Exceptions for Child Abuse



SECULAR CELEBRANTS



STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT



RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT

Foster Care & Adoption



Marriage-Related Services



Public Health Protections



Broad Liability Shield



TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP

Limited Filing Requirements



Parsonage Exemption



Property Tax Exemption



Sales Tax Exemption



ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW



Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW



ACCESS TO ABORTION

Constitutional or Statutory Protections



Statutory Abortion Ban



Private Enforcement Provisions



DENIAL OF CARE LAWS

Refusals Related to Abortion



Refusals Related to Contraception



Refusals Related to Sterilization



Religion-Based Health Care Law



CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING



NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION



Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by Christian nationalists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE



PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY



SEX EDUCATION

Comprehensive Sex Education



Abstinence Only Programs



HOMESCHOOLING LAWS

Instructor Qualifications



Testing & Evaluation



Child Abuse Prevention



Exemptions



SCHOOL CENSORSHIP LAWS

Divisive Topics Restricted



LGBTQ Topics Restricted



Religious Opt-Outs



RELIGIOUS DAYCARE EXEMPTION



ANTI-TRANS YOUTH LAWS

Medical Ban



Athlete Ban



ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW



BIBLE CLASS LAW



MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS



SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS



SCHOOL PRAYER LAW



RELEASED TIME LAWS

Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies



Academic Credit for Religious Education



CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW



KEY	Positive provision in place	Negative provision in place
	Positive provision not in place	Negative provision not in place

The State of the Secular States (2022) report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Indiana

RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS THAT UNDERMINE EQUALITY

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE



STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE



STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING



NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS

Employment



Housing



Public Accommodations



Education



Religious Exemptions



RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE



Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE

Mandatory Reporting



Exceptions for Child Abuse



SECULAR CELEBRANTS



STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT



RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT

Foster Care & Adoption



Marriage-Related Services



Public Health Protections



Broad Liability Shield



TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP

Limited Filing Requirements



Parsonage Exemption



Property Tax Exemption



Sales Tax Exemption



ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW



KEY	Positive provision in place	Negative provision in place
	Positive provision not in place	Negative provision not in place

The State of the Secular States (2022) report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW



ACCESS TO ABORTION

Constitutional or Statutory Protections



Statutory Abortion Ban



Private Enforcement Provisions



DENIAL OF CARE LAWS

Refusals Related to Abortion



Refusals Related to Contraception



Refusals Related to Sterilization



Religion-Based Health Care Law



CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING



NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION



Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by Christian nationalists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE



PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY



SEX EDUCATION

Comprehensive Sex Education



Abstinence Only Programs



HOMESCHOOLING LAWS

Instructor Qualifications



Testing & Evaluation



Child Abuse Prevention



Exemptions



SCHOOL CENSORSHIP LAWS

Divisive Topics Restricted



LGBTQ Topics Restricted



Religious Opt-Outs



RELIGIOUS DAYCARE EXEMPTION



ANTI-TRANS YOUTH LAWS

Medical Ban



Athlete Ban



ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW



BIBLE CLASS LAW



MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS



SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS



SCHOOL PRAYER LAW



RELEASED TIME LAWS

Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies



Academic Credit for Religious Education



CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW



Iowa

BASIC SEPARATION OF RELIGION AND GOVERNMENT

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
SECULAR CELEBRANTS	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
Public Health Protections	▼
Broad Liability Shield	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
ACCESS TO ABORTION	
Constitutional or Statutory Protections	▲
Statutory Abortion Ban	▼
Private Enforcement Provisions	▼
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Refusals Related to Abortion	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Religion-Based Health Care Law	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by Christian nationalists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
SCHOOL CENSORSHIP LAWS	
Divisive Topics Restricted	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
Religious Opt-Outs	▼
RELIGIOUS DAYCARE EXEMPTION	▼
ANTI-TRANS YOUTH LAWS	
Medical Ban	▼
Athlete Ban	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The State of the Secular States (2022) report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Kansas

RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS THAT UNDERMINE EQUALITY

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
SECULAR CELEBRANTS	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
Public Health Protections	▼
Broad Liability Shield	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The State of the Secular States (2022) report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
ACCESS TO ABORTION	
Constitutional or Statutory Protections	▲
Statutory Abortion Ban	▼
Private Enforcement Provisions	▼
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Refusals Related to Abortion	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Religion-Based Health Care Law	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by Christian nationalists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
SCHOOL CENSORSHIP LAWS	
Divisive Topics Restricted	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
Religious Opt-Outs	▼
RELIGIOUS DAYCARE EXEMPTION	▼
ANTI-TRANS YOUTH LAWS	
Medical Ban	▼
Athlete Ban	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼

Kentucky

RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS THAT UNDERMINE EQUALITY

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
SECULAR CELEBRANTS	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
Public Health Protections	▼
Broad Liability Shield	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The State of the Secular States (2022) report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
ACCESS TO ABORTION	
Constitutional or Statutory Protections	▲
Statutory Abortion Ban	▼
Private Enforcement Provisions	▼
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Refusals Related to Abortion	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Religion-Based Health Care Law	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by Christian nationalists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
SCHOOL CENSORSHIP LAWS	
Divisive Topics Restricted	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
Religious Opt-Outs	▼
RELIGIOUS DAYCARE EXEMPTION	▼
ANTI-TRANS YOUTH LAWS	
Medical Ban	▼
Athlete Ban	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼

Louisiana

RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS THAT UNDERMINE EQUALITY

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
SECULAR CELEBRANTS	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
Public Health Protections	▼
Broad Liability Shield	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	△ Positive provision not in place	▽ Negative provision not in place

The State of the Secular States (2022) report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	△
ACCESS TO ABORTION	
Constitutional or Statutory Protections	△
Statutory Abortion Ban	▼
Private Enforcement Provisions	▼
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Refusals Related to Abortion	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Religion-Based Health Care Law	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by Christian nationalists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	△
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	△
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	△
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	△
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	△
Exemptions	▼
SCHOOL CENSORSHIP LAWS	
Divisive Topics Restricted	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
Religious Opt-Outs	▼
RELIGIOUS DAYCARE EXEMPTION	▼
ANTI-TRANS YOUTH LAWS	
Medical Ban	▼
Athlete Ban	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼

Maine

STRONG PROTECTIONS FOR RELIGIOUS EQUALITY

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
SECULAR CELEBRANTS	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
Public Health Protections	▼
Broad Liability Shield	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The State of the Secular States (2022) report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
ACCESS TO ABORTION	
Constitutional or Statutory Protections	▲
Statutory Abortion Ban	▼
Private Enforcement Provisions	▼
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Refusals Related to Abortion	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Religion-Based Health Care Law	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by Christian nationalists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
SCHOOL CENSORSHIP LAWS	
Divisive Topics Restricted	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
Religious Opt-Outs	▼
RELIGIOUS DAYCARE EXEMPTION	▼
ANTI-TRANS YOUTH LAWS	
Medical Ban	▼
Athlete Ban	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼

Maryland

BASIC SEPARATION OF RELIGION AND GOVERNMENT

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
SECULAR CELEBRANTS	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
Public Health Protections	▼
Broad Liability Shield	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The State of the Secular States (2022) report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
ACCESS TO ABORTION	
Constitutional or Statutory Protections	▲
Statutory Abortion Ban	▼
Private Enforcement Provisions	▼
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Refusals Related to Abortion	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Religion-Based Health Care Law	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by Christian nationalists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
SCHOOL CENSORSHIP LAWS	
Divisive Topics Restricted	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
Religious Opt-Outs	▼
RELIGIOUS DAYCARE EXEMPTION	▼
ANTI-TRANS YOUTH LAWS	
Medical Ban	▼
Athlete Ban	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼

Massachusetts

BASIC SEPARATION OF RELIGION AND GOVERNMENT

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
SECULAR CELEBRANTS	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
Public Health Protections	▼
Broad Liability Shield	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The State of the Secular States (2022) report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
ACCESS TO ABORTION	
Constitutional or Statutory Protections	▲
Statutory Abortion Ban	▼
Private Enforcement Provisions	▼
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Refusals Related to Abortion	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Religion-Based Health Care Law	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by Christian nationalists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
SCHOOL CENSORSHIP LAWS	
Divisive Topics Restricted	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
Religious Opt-Outs	▼
RELIGIOUS DAYCARE EXEMPTION	▼
ANTI-TRANS YOUTH LAWS	
Medical Ban	▼
Athlete Ban	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼

Michigan

BASIC SEPARATION OF RELIGION AND GOVERNMENT

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
SECULAR CELEBRANTS	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
Public Health Protections	▼
Broad Liability Shield	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The State of the Secular States (2022) report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
ACCESS TO ABORTION	
Constitutional or Statutory Protections	▲
Statutory Abortion Ban	▼
Private Enforcement Provisions	▼
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Refusals Related to Abortion	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Religion-Based Health Care Law	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by Christian nationalists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
SCHOOL CENSORSHIP LAWS	
Divisive Topics Restricted	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
Religious Opt-Outs	▼
RELIGIOUS DAYCARE EXEMPTION	▼
ANTI-TRANS YOUTH LAWS	
Medical Ban	▼
Athlete Ban	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼

Minnesota

BASIC SEPARATION OF RELIGION AND GOVERNMENT

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE



STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE



STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING



NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS

Employment



Housing



Public Accommodations



Education



Religious Exemptions



RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE



Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE

Mandatory Reporting



Exceptions for Child Abuse



SECULAR CELEBRANTS



STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT



RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT

Foster Care & Adoption



Marriage-Related Services



Public Health Protections



Broad Liability Shield



TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP

Limited Filing Requirements



Parsonage Exemption



Property Tax Exemption



Sales Tax Exemption



ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW



KEY	Positive provision in place	Negative provision in place
	Positive provision not in place	Negative provision not in place

The State of the Secular States (2022) report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW



ACCESS TO ABORTION

Constitutional or Statutory Protections



Statutory Abortion Ban



Private Enforcement Provisions



DENIAL OF CARE LAWS

Refusals Related to Abortion



Refusals Related to Contraception



Refusals Related to Sterilization



Religion-Based Health Care Law



CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING



NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION



Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by Christian nationalists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE



PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY



SEX EDUCATION

Comprehensive Sex Education



Abstinence Only Programs



HOMESCHOOLING LAWS

Instructor Qualifications



Testing & Evaluation



Child Abuse Prevention



Exemptions



SCHOOL CENSORSHIP LAWS

Divisive Topics Restricted



LGBTQ Topics Restricted



Religious Opt-Outs



RELIGIOUS DAYCARE EXEMPTION



ANTI-TRANS YOUTH LAWS

Medical Ban



Athlete Ban



ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW



BIBLE CLASS LAW



MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS



SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS



SCHOOL PRAYER LAW



RELEASED TIME LAWS

Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies



Academic Credit for Religious Education



CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW



Mississippi

RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS THAT UNDERMINE EQUALITY

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE



STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE



STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING



NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS

Employment



Housing



Public Accommodations



Education



Religious Exemptions



RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE



Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE

Mandatory Reporting



Exceptions for Child Abuse



SECULAR CELEBRANTS



STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT



RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT

Foster Care & Adoption



Marriage-Related Services



Public Health Protections



Broad Liability Shield



TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP

Limited Filing Requirements



Parsonage Exemption



Property Tax Exemption



Sales Tax Exemption



ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW



KEY	Positive provision in place	Negative provision in place
	Positive provision not in place	Negative provision not in place

The State of the Secular States (2022) report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW



ACCESS TO ABORTION

Constitutional or Statutory Protections



Statutory Abortion Ban



Private Enforcement Provisions



DENIAL OF CARE LAWS

Refusals Related to Abortion



Refusals Related to Contraception



Refusals Related to Sterilization



Religion-Based Health Care Law



CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING



NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION



Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by Christian nationalists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE



PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY



SEX EDUCATION

Comprehensive Sex Education



Abstinence Only Programs



HOMESCHOOLING LAWS

Instructor Qualifications



Testing & Evaluation



Child Abuse Prevention



Exemptions



SCHOOL CENSORSHIP LAWS

Divisive Topics Restricted



LGBTQ Topics Restricted



Religious Opt-Outs



RELIGIOUS DAYCARE EXEMPTION



ANTI-TRANS YOUTH LAWS

Medical Ban



Athlete Ban



ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW



BIBLE CLASS LAW



MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS



SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS



SCHOOL PRAYER LAW



RELEASED TIME LAWS

Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies



Academic Credit for Religious Education



CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW



Missouri

RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS THAT UNDERMINE EQUALITY

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
SECULAR CELEBRANTS	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
Public Health Protections	▼
Broad Liability Shield	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	△ Positive provision not in place	▽ Negative provision not in place

The State of the Secular States (2022) report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	△
ACCESS TO ABORTION	
Constitutional or Statutory Protections	△
Statutory Abortion Ban	▼
Private Enforcement Provisions	▼
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Refusals Related to Abortion	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Religion-Based Health Care Law	▽
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by Christian nationalists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	△
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	△
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	△
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	△
Testing & Evaluation	△
Child Abuse Prevention	△
Exemptions	▼
SCHOOL CENSORSHIP LAWS	
Divisive Topics Restricted	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
Religious Opt-Outs	▼
RELIGIOUS DAYCARE EXEMPTION	▼
ANTI-TRANS YOUTH LAWS	
Medical Ban	▼
Athlete Ban	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼

Montana

RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS THAT UNDERMINE EQUALITY

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
SECULAR CELEBRANTS	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
Public Health Protections	▼
Broad Liability Shield	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The State of the Secular States (2022) report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
ACCESS TO ABORTION	
Constitutional or Statutory Protections	▲
Statutory Abortion Ban	▼
Private Enforcement Provisions	▼
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Refusals Related to Abortion	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Religion-Based Health Care Law	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by Christian nationalists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
SCHOOL CENSORSHIP LAWS	
Divisive Topics Restricted	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
Religious Opt-Outs	▼
RELIGIOUS DAYCARE EXEMPTION	▼
ANTI-TRANS YOUTH LAWS	
Medical Ban	▼
Athlete Ban	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼

Nebraska

BASIC SEPARATION OF RELIGION AND GOVERNMENT

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
SECULAR CELEBRANTS	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
Public Health Protections	▼
Broad Liability Shield	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The State of the Secular States (2022) report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
ACCESS TO ABORTION	
Constitutional or Statutory Protections	▲
Statutory Abortion Ban	▼
Private Enforcement Provisions	▼
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Refusals Related to Abortion	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Religion-Based Health Care Law	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by Christian nationalists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
SCHOOL CENSORSHIP LAWS	
Divisive Topics Restricted	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
Religious Opt-Outs	▼
RELIGIOUS DAYCARE EXEMPTION	▼
ANTI-TRANS YOUTH LAWS	
Medical Ban	▼
Athlete Ban	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼

Nevada

STRONG PROTECTIONS FOR RELIGIOUS EQUALITY

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
SECULAR CELEBRANTS	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
Public Health Protections	▼
Broad Liability Shield	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The State of the Secular States (2022) report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
ACCESS TO ABORTION	
Constitutional or Statutory Protections	▲
Statutory Abortion Ban	▼
Private Enforcement Provisions	▼
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Refusals Related to Abortion	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Religion-Based Health Care Law	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by Christian nationalists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
SCHOOL CENSORSHIP LAWS	
Divisive Topics Restricted	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
Religious Opt-Outs	▼
RELIGIOUS DAYCARE EXEMPTION	▼
ANTI-TRANS YOUTH LAWS	
Medical Ban	▼
Athlete Ban	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼

New Hampshire

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

STRONG PROTECTIONS FOR RELIGIOUS EQUALITY

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE



STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE



STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING



NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS

Employment



Housing



Public Accommodations



Education



Religious Exemptions



RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE



Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE

Mandatory Reporting



Exceptions for Child Abuse



SECULAR CELEBRANTS



STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT



RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT

Foster Care & Adoption



Marriage-Related Services



Public Health Protections



Broad Liability Shield



TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP

Limited Filing Requirements



Parsonage Exemption



Property Tax Exemption



Sales Tax Exemption



ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW



MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW



ACCESS TO ABORTION

Constitutional or Statutory Protections



Statutory Abortion Ban



Private Enforcement Provisions



DENIAL OF CARE LAWS

Refusals Related to Abortion



Refusals Related to Contraception



Refusals Related to Sterilization



Religion-Based Health Care Law



CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING



NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION



Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by Christian nationalists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE



PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY



SEX EDUCATION

Comprehensive Sex Education



Abstinence Only Programs



HOMESCHOOLING LAWS

Instructor Qualifications



Testing & Evaluation



Child Abuse Prevention



Exemptions



SCHOOL CENSORSHIP LAWS

Divisive Topics Restricted



LGBTQ Topics Restricted



Religious Opt-Outs



RELIGIOUS DAYCARE EXEMPTION



ANTI-TRANS YOUTH LAWS

Medical Ban



Athlete Ban



ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW



BIBLE CLASS LAW



MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS



SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS



SCHOOL PRAYER LAW



RELEASED TIME LAWS

Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies



Academic Credit for Religious Education



CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW



KEY	Positive provision in place	Negative provision in place
	Positive provision not in place	Negative provision not in place

The State of the Secular States (2022) report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

New Jersey

STRONG PROTECTIONS FOR RELIGIOUS EQUALITY

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE



STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE



STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING



NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS

Employment



Housing



Public Accommodations



Education



Religious Exemptions



RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE



Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE

Mandatory Reporting



Exceptions for Child Abuse



SECULAR CELEBRANTS



STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT



RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT

Foster Care & Adoption



Marriage-Related Services



Public Health Protections



Broad Liability Shield



TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP

Limited Filing Requirements



Parsonage Exemption



Property Tax Exemption



Sales Tax Exemption



ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW



KEY	Positive provision in place	Negative provision in place
	Positive provision not in place	Negative provision not in place

The State of the Secular States (2022) report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW



ACCESS TO ABORTION

Constitutional or Statutory Protections



Statutory Abortion Ban



Private Enforcement Provisions



DENIAL OF CARE LAWS

Refusals Related to Abortion



Refusals Related to Contraception



Refusals Related to Sterilization



Religion-Based Health Care Law



CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING



NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION



Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by Christian nationalists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE



PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY



SEX EDUCATION

Comprehensive Sex Education



Abstinence Only Programs



HOMESCHOOLING LAWS

Instructor Qualifications



Testing & Evaluation



Child Abuse Prevention



Exemptions



SCHOOL CENSORSHIP LAWS

Divisive Topics Restricted



LGBTQ Topics Restricted



Religious Opt-Outs



RELIGIOUS DAYCARE EXEMPTION



ANTI-TRANS YOUTH LAWS

Medical Ban



Athlete Ban



ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW



BIBLE CLASS LAW



MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS



SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS



SCHOOL PRAYER LAW



RELEASED TIME LAWS

Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies



Academic Credit for Religious Education



CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW



New Mexico

BASIC SEPARATION OF RELIGION AND GOVERNMENT

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
SECULAR CELEBRANTS	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
Public Health Protections	▼
Broad Liability Shield	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The State of the Secular States (2022) report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
ACCESS TO ABORTION	
Constitutional or Statutory Protections	▲
Statutory Abortion Ban	▼
Private Enforcement Provisions	▼
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Refusals Related to Abortion	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Religion-Based Health Care Law	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by Christian nationalists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
SCHOOL CENSORSHIP LAWS	
Divisive Topics Restricted	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
Religious Opt-Outs	▼
RELIGIOUS DAYCARE EXEMPTION	▼
ANTI-TRANS YOUTH LAWS	
Medical Ban	▼
Athlete Ban	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼

New York

STRONG PROTECTIONS FOR RELIGIOUS EQUALITY

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
SECULAR CELEBRANTS	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
Public Health Protections	▼
Broad Liability Shield	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The State of the Secular States (2022) report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
ACCESS TO ABORTION	
Constitutional or Statutory Protections	▲
Statutory Abortion Ban	▼
Private Enforcement Provisions	▼
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Refusals Related to Abortion	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Religion-Based Health Care Law	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by Christian nationalists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
SCHOOL CENSORSHIP LAWS	
Divisive Topics Restricted	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
Religious Opt-Outs	▼
RELIGIOUS DAYCARE EXEMPTION	▼
ANTI-TRANS YOUTH LAWS	
Medical Ban	▼
Athlete Ban	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼

North Carolina

RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS THAT UNDERMINE EQUALITY

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
SECULAR CELEBRANTS	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
Public Health Protections	▼
Broad Liability Shield	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The State of the Secular States (2022) report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
ACCESS TO ABORTION	
Constitutional or Statutory Protections	▲
Statutory Abortion Ban	▼
Private Enforcement Provisions	▼
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Refusals Related to Abortion	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Religion-Based Health Care Law	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by Christian nationalists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
SCHOOL CENSORSHIP LAWS	
Divisive Topics Restricted	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
Religious Opt-Outs	▼
RELIGIOUS DAYCARE EXEMPTION	▼
ANTI-TRANS YOUTH LAWS	
Medical Ban	▼
Athlete Ban	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼

North Dakota

RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS THAT UNDERMINE EQUALITY

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
SECULAR CELEBRANTS	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
Public Health Protections	▼
Broad Liability Shield	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The State of the Secular States (2022) report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
ACCESS TO ABORTION	
Constitutional or Statutory Protections	▲
Statutory Abortion Ban	▼
Private Enforcement Provisions	▼
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Refusals Related to Abortion	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Religion-Based Health Care Law	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by Christian nationalists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
SCHOOL CENSORSHIP LAWS	
Divisive Topics Restricted	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
Religious Opt-Outs	▼
RELIGIOUS DAYCARE EXEMPTION	▼
ANTI-TRANS YOUTH LAWS	
Medical Ban	▼
Athlete Ban	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼

RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS THAT UNDERMINE EQUALITY

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
SECULAR CELEBRANTS	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
Public Health Protections	▼
Broad Liability Shield	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	△ Positive provision not in place	▽ Negative provision not in place

The State of the Secular States (2022) report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	△
ACCESS TO ABORTION	
Constitutional or Statutory Protections	△
Statutory Abortion Ban	▼
Private Enforcement Provisions	▼
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Refusals Related to Abortion	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▽
Religion-Based Health Care Law	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by Christian nationalists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	△
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	△
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	△
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	△
Exemptions	▼
SCHOOL CENSORSHIP LAWS	
Divisive Topics Restricted	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
Religious Opt-Outs	▼
RELIGIOUS DAYCARE EXEMPTION	▼
ANTI-TRANS YOUTH LAWS	
Medical Ban	▼
Athlete Ban	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼

Oklahoma

RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS THAT UNDERMINE EQUALITY

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
SECULAR CELEBRANTS	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
Public Health Protections	▼
Broad Liability Shield	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
ACCESS TO ABORTION	
Constitutional or Statutory Protections	▲
Statutory Abortion Ban	▼
Private Enforcement Provisions	▼
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Refusals Related to Abortion	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Religion-Based Health Care Law	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by Christian nationalists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
SCHOOL CENSORSHIP LAWS	
Divisive Topics Restricted	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
Religious Opt-Outs	▼
RELIGIOUS DAYCARE EXEMPTION	▼
ANTI-TRANS YOUTH LAWS	
Medical Ban	▼
Athlete Ban	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The State of the Secular States (2022) report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Oregon

STRONG PROTECTIONS FOR RELIGIOUS EQUALITY

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
SECULAR CELEBRANTS	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
Public Health Protections	▼
Broad Liability Shield	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	△ Positive provision not in place	▽ Negative provision not in place

The State of the Secular States (2022) report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
ACCESS TO ABORTION	
Constitutional or Statutory Protections	▲
Statutory Abortion Ban	▼
Private Enforcement Provisions	▼
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Refusals Related to Abortion	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Religion-Based Health Care Law	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by Christian nationalists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
SCHOOL CENSORSHIP LAWS	
Divisive Topics Restricted	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
Religious Opt-Outs	▼
RELIGIOUS DAYCARE EXEMPTION	▼
ANTI-TRANS YOUTH LAWS	
Medical Ban	▼
Athlete Ban	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼

Pennsylvania

RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS THAT UNDERMINE EQUALITY

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
SECULAR CELEBRANTS	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
Public Health Protections	▼
Broad Liability Shield	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	△ Positive provision not in place	▽ Negative provision not in place

The State of the Secular States (2022) report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	△
ACCESS TO ABORTION	
Constitutional or Statutory Protections	△
Statutory Abortion Ban	▽
Private Enforcement Provisions	▽
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Refusals Related to Abortion	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Religion-Based Health Care Law	▽
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by Christian nationalists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	△
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	△
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	△
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▽
SCHOOL CENSORSHIP LAWS	
Divisive Topics Restricted	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
Religious Opt-Outs	▼
RELIGIOUS DAYCARE EXEMPTION	▼
ANTI-TRANS YOUTH LAWS	
Medical Ban	▼
Athlete Ban	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼

Puerto Rico

BASIC SEPARATION OF RELIGION AND GOVERNMENT

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
SECULAR CELEBRANTS	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
Public Health Protections	▼
Broad Liability Shield	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The State of the Secular States (2022) report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
ACCESS TO ABORTION	
Constitutional or Statutory Protections	▲
Statutory Abortion Ban	▼
Private Enforcement Provisions	▼
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Refusals Related to Abortion	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Religion-Based Health Care Law	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by Christian nationalists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
SCHOOL CENSORSHIP LAWS	
Divisive Topics Restricted	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
Religious Opt-Outs	▼
RELIGIOUS DAYCARE EXEMPTION	▼
ANTI-TRANS YOUTH LAWS	
Medical Ban	▼
Athlete Ban	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼

Rhode Island

BASIC SEPARATION OF RELIGION AND GOVERNMENT

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE



STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE



STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING



NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS

Employment



Housing



Public Accommodations



Education



Religious Exemptions



RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE



Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE

Mandatory Reporting



Exceptions for Child Abuse



SECULAR CELEBRANTS



STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT



RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT

Foster Care & Adoption



Marriage-Related Services



Public Health Protections



Broad Liability Shield



TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP

Limited Filing Requirements



Parsonage Exemption



Property Tax Exemption



Sales Tax Exemption



ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW



KEY	Positive provision in place	Negative provision in place
	Positive provision not in place	Negative provision not in place

The State of the Secular States (2022) report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW



ACCESS TO ABORTION

Constitutional or Statutory Protections



Statutory Abortion Ban



Private Enforcement Provisions



DENIAL OF CARE LAWS

Refusals Related to Abortion



Refusals Related to Contraception



Refusals Related to Sterilization



Religion-Based Health Care Law



CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING



NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION



Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by Christian nationalists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE



PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY



SEX EDUCATION

Comprehensive Sex Education



Abstinence Only Programs



HOMESCHOOLING LAWS

Instructor Qualifications



Testing & Evaluation



Child Abuse Prevention



Exemptions



SCHOOL CENSORSHIP LAWS

Divisive Topics Restricted



LGBTQ Topics Restricted



Religious Opt-Outs



RELIGIOUS DAYCARE EXEMPTION



ANTI-TRANS YOUTH LAWS

Medical Ban



Athlete Ban



ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW



BIBLE CLASS LAW



MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS



SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS



SCHOOL PRAYER LAW



RELEASED TIME LAWS

Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies



Academic Credit for Religious Education



CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW



South Carolina

RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS THAT UNDERMINE EQUALITY

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
SECULAR CELEBRANTS	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
Public Health Protections	▼
Broad Liability Shield	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The State of the Secular States (2022) report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
ACCESS TO ABORTION	
Constitutional or Statutory Protections	▲
Statutory Abortion Ban	▼
Private Enforcement Provisions	▼
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Refusals Related to Abortion	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Religion-Based Health Care Law	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by Christian nationalists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
SCHOOL CENSORSHIP LAWS	
Divisive Topics Restricted	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
Religious Opt-Outs	▼
RELIGIOUS DAYCARE EXEMPTION	▼
ANTI-TRANS YOUTH LAWS	
Medical Ban	▼
Athlete Ban	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼

South Dakota

RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS THAT UNDERMINE EQUALITY

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
SECULAR CELEBRANTS	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
Public Health Protections	▼
Broad Liability Shield	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	△ Positive provision not in place	▽ Negative provision not in place

The State of the Secular States (2022) report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	△
ACCESS TO ABORTION	
Constitutional or Statutory Protections	△
Statutory Abortion Ban	▼
Private Enforcement Provisions	▼
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Refusals Related to Abortion	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▽
Religion-Based Health Care Law	▽
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by Christian nationalists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	△
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	△
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	△
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	△
Testing & Evaluation	△
Child Abuse Prevention	△
Exemptions	▽
SCHOOL CENSORSHIP LAWS	
Divisive Topics Restricted	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
Religious Opt-Outs	▼
RELIGIOUS DAYCARE EXEMPTION	▼
ANTI-TRANS YOUTH LAWS	
Medical Ban	▼
Athlete Ban	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼

Tennessee

RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS THAT UNDERMINE EQUALITY

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
SECULAR CELEBRANTS	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
Public Health Protections	▼
Broad Liability Shield	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The State of the Secular States (2022) report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
ACCESS TO ABORTION	
Constitutional or Statutory Protections	▲
Statutory Abortion Ban	▼
Private Enforcement Provisions	▼
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Refusals Related to Abortion	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Religion-Based Health Care Law	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by Christian nationalists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
SCHOOL CENSORSHIP LAWS	
Divisive Topics Restricted	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
Religious Opt-Outs	▼
RELIGIOUS DAYCARE EXEMPTION	▼
ANTI-TRANS YOUTH LAWS	
Medical Ban	▼
Athlete Ban	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼

Texas

RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS THAT UNDERMINE EQUALITY

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
SECULAR CELEBRANTS	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
Public Health Protections	▼
Broad Liability Shield	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The State of the Secular States (2022) report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
ACCESS TO ABORTION	
Constitutional or Statutory Protections	▲
Statutory Abortion Ban	▼
Private Enforcement Provisions	▼
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Refusals Related to Abortion	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Religion-Based Health Care Law	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by Christian nationalists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
SCHOOL CENSORSHIP LAWS	
Divisive Topics Restricted	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
Religious Opt-Outs	▼
RELIGIOUS DAYCARE EXEMPTION	▼
ANTI-TRANS YOUTH LAWS	
Medical Ban	▼
Athlete Ban	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼

Utah

BASIC SEPARATION OF RELIGION AND GOVERNMENT

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
SECULAR CELEBRANTS	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
Public Health Protections	▼
Broad Liability Shield	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The State of the Secular States (2022) report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
ACCESS TO ABORTION	
Constitutional or Statutory Protections	▲
Statutory Abortion Ban	▼
Private Enforcement Provisions	▼
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Refusals Related to Abortion	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Religion-Based Health Care Law	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by Christian nationalists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
SCHOOL CENSORSHIP LAWS	
Divisive Topics Restricted	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
Religious Opt-Outs	▼
RELIGIOUS DAYCARE EXEMPTION	▼
ANTI-TRANS YOUTH LAWS	
Medical Ban	▼
Athlete Ban	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼

Vermont

STRONG PROTECTIONS FOR RELIGIOUS EQUALITY

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
SECULAR CELEBRANTS	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
Public Health Protections	▼
Broad Liability Shield	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	△ Positive provision not in place	▽ Negative provision not in place

The State of the Secular States (2022) report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
ACCESS TO ABORTION	
Constitutional or Statutory Protections	▲
Statutory Abortion Ban	▼
Private Enforcement Provisions	▼
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Refusals Related to Abortion	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Religion-Based Health Care Law	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by Christian nationalists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
SCHOOL CENSORSHIP LAWS	
Divisive Topics Restricted	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
Religious Opt-Outs	▼
RELIGIOUS DAYCARE EXEMPTION	▼
ANTI-TRANS YOUTH LAWS	
Medical Ban	▼
Athlete Ban	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼

Virginia

BASIC SEPARATION OF RELIGION AND GOVERNMENT

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
SECULAR CELEBRANTS	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
Public Health Protections	▼
Broad Liability Shield	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The State of the Secular States (2022) report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
ACCESS TO ABORTION	
Constitutional or Statutory Protections	▲
Statutory Abortion Ban	▼
Private Enforcement Provisions	▼
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Refusals Related to Abortion	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Religion-Based Health Care Law	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by Christian nationalists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
SCHOOL CENSORSHIP LAWS	
Divisive Topics Restricted	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
Religious Opt-Outs	▼
RELIGIOUS DAYCARE EXEMPTION	▼
ANTI-TRANS YOUTH LAWS	
Medical Ban	▼
Athlete Ban	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼

Washington

STRONG PROTECTIONS FOR RELIGIOUS EQUALITY

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
SECULAR CELEBRANTS	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
Public Health Protections	▼
Broad Liability Shield	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The State of the Secular States (2022) report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
ACCESS TO ABORTION	
Constitutional or Statutory Protections	▲
Statutory Abortion Ban	▼
Private Enforcement Provisions	▼
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Refusals Related to Abortion	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Religion-Based Health Care Law	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by Christian nationalists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
SCHOOL CENSORSHIP LAWS	
Divisive Topics Restricted	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
Religious Opt-Outs	▼
RELIGIOUS DAYCARE EXEMPTION	▼
ANTI-TRANS YOUTH LAWS	
Medical Ban	▼
Athlete Ban	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼

West Virginia

BASIC SEPARATION OF RELIGION AND GOVERNMENT

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
SECULAR CELEBRANTS	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
Public Health Protections	▼
Broad Liability Shield	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The State of the Secular States (2022) report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
ACCESS TO ABORTION	
Constitutional or Statutory Protections	▲
Statutory Abortion Ban	▼
Private Enforcement Provisions	▼
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Refusals Related to Abortion	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Religion-Based Health Care Law	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by Christian nationalists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
SCHOOL CENSORSHIP LAWS	
Divisive Topics Restricted	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
Religious Opt-Outs	▼
RELIGIOUS DAYCARE EXEMPTION	▼
ANTI-TRANS YOUTH LAWS	
Medical Ban	▼
Athlete Ban	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼

Wisconsin

BASIC SEPARATION OF RELIGION AND GOVERNMENT

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
SECULAR CELEBRANTS	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
Public Health Protections	▼
Broad Liability Shield	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	△ Positive provision not in place	▽ Negative provision not in place

The State of the Secular States (2022) report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	△
ACCESS TO ABORTION	
Constitutional or Statutory Protections	△
Statutory Abortion Ban	▼
Private Enforcement Provisions	▼
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Refusals Related to Abortion	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Religion-Based Health Care Law	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by Christian nationalists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	△
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	△
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	△
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	△
Testing & Evaluation	△
Child Abuse Prevention	△
Exemptions	▼
SCHOOL CENSORSHIP LAWS	
Divisive Topics Restricted	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
Religious Opt-Outs	▼
RELIGIOUS DAYCARE EXEMPTION	▼
ANTI-TRANS YOUTH LAWS	
Medical Ban	▼
Athlete Ban	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼

Wyoming

BASIC SEPARATION OF RELIGION AND GOVERNMENT

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
SECULAR CELEBRANTS	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
Public Health Protections	▼
Broad Liability Shield	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The State of the Secular States (2022) report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
ACCESS TO ABORTION	
Constitutional or Statutory Protections	▲
Statutory Abortion Ban	▼
Private Enforcement Provisions	▼
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Refusals Related to Abortion	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Religion-Based Health Care Law	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by Christian nationalists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
SCHOOL CENSORSHIP LAWS	
Divisive Topics Restricted	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
Religious Opt-Outs	▼
RELIGIOUS DAYCARE EXEMPTION	▼
ANTI-TRANS YOUTH LAWS	
Medical Ban	▼
Athlete Ban	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼

Our Organization

AMERICAN ATHEISTS is a national civil rights organization that works to achieve religious equality for all Americans by protecting what Thomas Jefferson called the “wall of separation” between government and religion created by the First Amendment. We strive to create an environment where atheism and atheists are accepted as members of our nation’s communities and where casual bigotry against our community is seen as abhorrent and unacceptable. We promote understanding of atheists through education, outreach, and community-building and work to end the stigma associated with being an atheist in America.

American Atheists is committed to providing resources and tools to help our local grassroots organizers grow and sustain vibrant communities. By emphasizing activities in the four core areas of our ACES program—Activism, Community, Education, and Service—affiliate groups can provide support for their members while expanding engagement in their local community, improving policy outcomes at every level of government, and normalizing atheism across the nation. To find out more about becoming a volunteer leader or to find a local affiliate group, please email us at field@atheists.org.

American Atheists seeks to empower its constituents to be effective advocates for state and local policy change. We monitor bills and policies that affect the separation of religion and government, and inform grassroots leaders about such measures, enabling them to amplify their outreach to lawmakers. We support these efforts by providing advocacy resources, bill analyses, effective messaging, and assistance with coalition-building and drafting legislation. We are always eager to work with state and local advocates on the various laws and policies discussed in this report. For example, in several states we have built and support teams of advocates to focus on proactive legislation. If you are interested in engaging in this work, please email us at advocacy@atheists.org.

Acknowledgements

This report required a significant amount of meticulous research to ensure the accuracy of each state scorecard. Much of that research was conducted by American Atheists’ 2022 summer law clerks Victoria Anderson, Bryce Nolan, and Sam McKenzie. We thank them for their thorough work and their insightful assessments of state law. Special thanks goes to Adriana Buenaventura Martinez for her research and assessment of law and policy measures in Puerto Rico. We also thank 2022 fall law clerks Arlo Blaisus and Patrick Sawyer for their assistance with review and verification.

We thank Carol Corbett Burris, Jennifer Driver, Dr. Philip Gorski, Nicholas Little, Dr. Darrel Ray, and Shireen Rose Shakouri for their contributions to this report. We also thank Tom Van Denburgh for managing media outreach, and Nick Fish for his strong support for this important work. Finally, we thank the American Atheists staff who reviewed and edited this report.

Recommended Citation

When referencing this report, we recommend the following citation:

Gill, A.M. (2023). *2022 State of the Secular States*. Cranford, NJ: American Atheists.

This report is available online at:
www.atheists.org/states



2022
STATE OF THE
SECULAR STATES

*A Review of State Legislation Affecting the
Separation of Religion and Government*

www.atheists.org/states