



Office of the President

The In-Equality Act

The idea of the equality of humanity finds its genesis in the Bible. The Judeo-Christian perspective of humanity is birthed from the statement, "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them" (Genesis 1:27). This description of humanity being created in the very image of God infers the reality that every human being, wherever and whenever existing, is equal in the sight of God and therefore carries significant value and is worthy of dignity, respect and protection. This fundamental belief of the equality of humanity motivated people of faith throughout the centuries to serve the poor, fight to abolish the evil institution of slavery, found orphanages, hospitals and adoption agencies, overthrow caste systems, fight against abortion and establish systems of justice.

The United States of America was founded in order for its people to escape religious persecution and oppressive government control over the practice of faith. The First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, in order to ensure the free exercise of religion, states, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." Thomas Jefferson, in his letter to the Danbury Baptists in 1802, describes the First Amendment as a "wall of separation between the Church and the State." This "wall of separation" does not exist to protect religion from influencing government, but to protect government from controlling religion.

Our nation's congress is currently considering a bill called the Equality Act. This moniker is anything but accurate. While the bill does provide civil rights protection for members of the SOGI (Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity) population, it does so at the expense of people and institutions of faith. No individual should be precluded from a bank loan or an apartment lease merely because of their sexual orientation or gender identity. Providing clear guidance around these issues is important. However, requiring individuals and institutions of faith to compromise their closely held religious beliefs is not necessary in protecting the SOGI population from potential discrimination. If this in-equality bill passes and becomes law, people and institutions of faith will experience government control in the exact manner the First Amendment clearly promises to protect against.

Multiple faiths believe that intimate sexual expression is reserved exclusively for a marriage relationship between one man and one woman for life. This belief stems from the same verses of the Bible that speaks of the equality of humanity. The creation narrative of Genesis 1 and 2 speak of marriage being when a "man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh" (Genesis 2:24). The purpose of this unique and

exclusive relationship is to accomplish God's command to be "fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it" (Genesis 1:28). The commitment, therefore, to sexual purity and the establishment of families, is fundamental to the Jewish, Muslim and Christian faiths.

The United States of America is not a Christian, nor Jewish, nor Muslim nation. We are a nation founded upon the idea that people of faith should be free to practice their faith without fear of government recompense or reprisal. Yet, this proposed bill would make it illegal to hold a traditional biblical view of human sexuality and marriage. This bill would legally require Muslim Imams to perform wedding ceremonies for same-sex couples. This bill would legally require Jewish synagogues to eradicate any behavioral codes of conduct. This bill would restrict financially needy students attending Christian colleges and universities from receiving Pell Grants and federally subsidized loans. This bill is no "Equality Act." Instead, the proposed law provides legal means of discriminating against individuals and institutions of faith. A true "Equality Act" would find a way to provide civil rights protection for the SOGI population without incriminating persons and institutions of faith.



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