

CHURCHES BARRED FROM **'GAY' DISCRIMINATION**

NEW MEASURE REQUIRES RELIGIOUS GROUPS TO HIRE HOMOSEXUALS

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A note from Pastor Kevin Lea follows this article.

Illinois churches are protesting a new state law that bars them from "discriminating" against homosexuals, contending it robs Christians of their First Amendment freedoms.

Gov. Rod Blagojevich signed the bill into law yesterday amid a demonstration led by the Illinois Family Institute, or IFI, a non-profit group affiliated with Focus on the Family, Family Research Council and Alliance Defense Fund.

The measure adds "sexual orientation" to the state law that bars discrimination based on race, religion and similar traits in areas such as jobs and housing.

The bill was signed to loud cheers and a standing ovation from about 150 homosexual-rights supporters who see it as a human-rights issue.

"This legislation sends a clear message that we will not allow our citizens to be discriminated against," Blagojevich said in a statement.

"What we're doing today is older than scripture: Love thy neighbor," the governor told the audience yesterday, according to the Associated Press. "It's what Jesus said when he gave his Sermon on the Mount: 'Do unto others what you would have others do unto you.'"

Illinois is the 15th state to prohibit discrimination based on "sexual orientation."

But IFI Executive Director Peter LaBarbera notes the bill's sponsor, state Sen. Carol Ronen, D-Chicago, is on record stating it should be applied to

churches, meaning they would not be allowed, for example, to reject a job applicant who practices homosexual behavior.

Ronen said: "If that is their goal, to discriminate against gay people, this law wouldn't allow them to do that. But I don't believe that's what the Catholic Church wants or stands for."

LaBarbera argues politicians who don't view homosexuality as a sin have no right to take away the freedom of churches and people of faith to disagree.

"Since when do politicians get to interpret sacred religious teachings for the rest of us?" he said.

The law applies to organizations or businesses with more than 15 employees.

LaBarbera points out the Illinois law firm Ungaretti & Harris, which specializes in labor and employment issues, published an analysis of the measure, which says, "While many such municipal prohibitions on sexual orientation discrimination expressly exempt religious organizations from their coverage, the new amendment to Illinois' Human Rights Act does not."

The analysis says, "The question inevitably presented by this omission is whether the Bill will be applied to compel religious organizations to set aside convictions about homosexuality when making employment decisions. ... The measure may ultimately force courts to consider and balance its ban on sexual orientation discrimination with State and Federal constitutional safeguards of religious freedom."

LaBarbera says that with enactment of this law, government is coming down on one side of a heated moral controversy by forcing the acceptance of homosexuality, bisexuality and transsexuality.

"It's about saying that 'gay rights' are more important than religious freedoms, and we hope ultimately it will be struck down in court," he said.

The bill was passed on the last day of a lame-duck legislative session after a campaign by the state's leading homosexual lobby, Equality Illinois.

Commented LaBarbera: "There is no societal consensus for homosexuality, bisexuality or transsexuality as the basis for civil rights -- and certainly none for the idea that the 'rights' of homosexual should trump those of churches and people of faith to live our their rational belief that homosexuality is unnatural, wrong and harmful to those who practice it."

Note from Pastor Kevin: In Ephesians 6, the Apostle Paul tells us:

“For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.

If not for this understanding from God’s Word, we would be in a state of shock and disbelief over the passage of this bill.

For the first time in the history of this nation, rights are presumed to be extended to a group based on how they perform sex acts, which trump the rights given to us by God and that were guaranteed to the citizens of this country in the Bill of Rights?

This is shocking enough, but the big picture is even worse. These newly given rights are extended to a small class of people who, in choosing a perverted lifestyle, drastically shorten their own lives. They also spread diseases that are largely responsible for the deaths of millions of people globally, and are contributing to the rapid collapse of our health care system in America.

During the early days of the AIDS outbreak, it was common knowledge that the first to be infected were homosexual men contaminating each other in the bathhouses of California. During their trips abroad to Africa and Asia (to find children and men they could seduce) the beginning seeds of this biological holocaust were sown.

Soon it spread into the heterosexual communities in these nations and millions are now dying. But does anyone care? Is anyone proposing that we deal with this disease as we did with the SARS epidemic? Are the governments of the world warning the homosexual and heterosexual communities that if we don’t repent and again embrace the teachings of the Bible advocating virginity until marriage, and a heterosexual, monogamous relationship with your spouse until death you do part that soon no one will be free from some form of sexually transmitted disease?

What can explain the resounding, “No!” to these questions, save the words from the Apostle Paul above, which warn us that we are in a spiritual battle?

The enemy of our souls is Satan. He deceives those who want to believe his lies into departing from the laws of God. He also inspires his servants to hate those who are opposed to his deadly deceptions. I believe he is waging a major offensive in this country because it is

the last place on Earth where Christians are generally free to voice the gospel of Jesus Christ and the need to obey the laws of God.

This Illinois law is one of the first salvos of Satan's plan to persecute American Christians into silence. But we must not be silenced! Homosexuality is an abomination to God:

Lev 18:22 'You shall not lie with a male as with a woman. It is an abomination.

So is bestiality:

Lev 18:23 'Nor shall you mate with any animal, to defile yourself with it. Nor shall any woman stand before an animal to mate with it. It is perversion.

And any people who embrace these things and call them good will be destroyed:

Lev 18:24 'Do not defile yourselves with any of these things; for by all these the nations are defiled, which I am casting out before you. 25 'For the land is defiled; therefore I visit the punishment of its iniquity upon it, and the land vomits out its inhabitants. (NKJ)

Could this be why our country is experiencing increased "weird" weather, staggering indebtedness, battle fatigue in our many wars, hatred toward us by other nations, etc? See Deuteronomy 28 for the list of these and many other curses that come on a country that turns away from God.

In the mean time, before our rapid decay downward hits solid judgment and America joins the list of nations that have risen and fallen, we must be ever more vigilant to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Eph 6:17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; 18 praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints-- 19 and for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel, 20 for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak. (NKJ)

