

On Hate Crimes Legislation

San Antonio, TX - 2007

WHEREAS, The U.S. House of Representatives has passed the Local Law Enforcement Hate Crimes Prevention Act of 2007, H.R. 1592, and a similar bill has been introduced in the U.S. Senate; and

WHEREAS, These bills create special protected classes of homosexual and transgendered persons; and

WHEREAS, The Bible is clear in its denunciation of homosexual behavior (Leviticus 18:22; Romans 1:21-28; 1 Corinthians 6:9), and upon that basis, our Founding Fathers and early laws opposed its practice in American society; and

WHEREAS, Proponents argue that the establishment of such protected classes is a civil rights issue, yet neither homosexuals nor transgendered persons constitute a class like race, ethnicity, or gender because their identity is based upon a lifestyle choice; and

WHEREAS, Such hate crimes legislation violates the U.S. Constitution's Fourteenth Amendment guarantee of equal protection under the law by extending special protected status to certain groups of people that is not available for others; and

WHEREAS, Such hate crimes legislation criminalizes beliefs as well as actions, creating a form of thought crime; and

WHEREAS, In many jurisdictions where such thought crimes laws have been passed, they have been used to actively punish Christians who peacefully voice their moral opposition to homosexual conduct; and

WHEREAS, Harry Hammond, an evangelical Christian in Britain, was arrested for holding a sign protesting homosexuality, and Britain's High Court ruled in 2004 that he was "properly convicted" of a criminal offense, despite the fact that he was demonstrating peacefully and was assaulted by homosexual onlookers enraged by his sign; and

WHEREAS, Hugh Owens of Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada, was found guilty in 2001 of "inciting hatred" by the Human Rights Commission and ordered to pay C\$1,500 to three homosexual activists for publishing an advertisement quoting Bible verses about homosexuality; and

WHEREAS, Pastor Ake Green of Borgholm, Sweden, was sentenced to a month in jail in 2003 for “inciting hatred” based on that nation’s hate crimes laws when he preached a grace- and truth-filled message concerning homosexuality, comparing the sins of Sweden to the sins of Sodom; and

WHEREAS, Eleven Christians in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, were physically accosted by homosexual demonstrators in 2004 and yet were themselves arrested on felony counts based on hate crimes laws for lawfully and peacefully protesting and sharing the Gospel at a “gay pride” event; and

WHEREAS, Many Christian leaders and pro-family groups are alarmed at the prospect of a law in which a person’s thoughts or opinions alone—particularly disapproval of homosexual behavior—would lead to federal prosecution; and

WHEREAS, The inevitable application of this legislation would abridge our First Amendment freedom of speech and thus criminalize biblical preaching and speaking truth about homosexuality, achieving a key goal of homosexual activists and their allies, which is to muzzle the church in its moral opposition to their sinful lifestyle; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in San Antonio, Texas, June 12-13, 2007, express profound disappointment in the members of the U.S. House who passed the Local Law Enforcement Hate Crimes Prevention Act of 2007; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we strongly urge the members of the U.S. Senate to reject this and any other bill that creates a special protected status for certain groups, violating the U.S. Constitution’s Fourteenth Amendment guarantee of equal protection; and be it further

RESOLVED, That if Congress passes this hate crimes bill, or any similar bill, we strongly encourage the president to veto such unconstitutional legislation because it undermines the Fourteenth Amendment’s equal protection guarantee, and its application poses a direct threat to the First Amendment freedom of speech of those morally opposed to homosexuality; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we urge all Americans to avoid acts of hatred and violence toward homosexuals and transgendered people, but to instead treat our fellow citizens with the kind of civility we would prefer to receive ourselves (Matthew 7:12); and be it finally

RESOLVED, That we encourage all believers to love and show compassion toward homosexuals and transgendered persons, sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ, who is able to bring true freedom from error and to set free the captives of sin (John 8:34-36).

[View all 2007 Resolutions.](#)

SBC.NET - One People. One Purpose. One Click.
Copyright © 2014 Southern Baptist Convention. Terms of Use