

# **Equality Act's radical gender ideology threatens religious freedom and women's rights**

The Democratic-controlled House is set to vote on and pass the Equality Act, an insidious piece of legislation that hides its religious bigotry beneath a catchy title and a claim to fairness.

The bill's proponents argue it would simply codify a recent Supreme Court decision in which the justices agreed that the 1964 Civil Rights Act prohibits discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and "transgender status," rather than just gender. But the bill does not just expand equal protection rights to the LGBT community, as Democrats have said. It would also gut the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, undermine gender-inclusive groups, such as women's sports teams, and give leftists license to punish anyone who does not conform to their gender ideology.

The Equality Act would make sure people of faith are forced to comply. The bill literally contains a statute that says religious exemptions that normally apply to federal law would not apply to the Equality Act. This means if a transgender person took a Baptist church to court for refusing to hire him, the church could not use its religious beliefs as the justification. Or, if a baker refused to serve a gay couple based on his religious beliefs about marriage, he would have a much harder time making his case in court because the law would be stacked against him.

In other words, the Equality Act makes it impossible for religious groups and persons to appeal any penalties imposed under the law. It takes away one of their most important lines of defense and leaves them open to attacks from anyone who might disagree with their beliefs.

By erasing gender as a distinct legal category, the bill would also undermine the rights of gender-exclusive groups and spaces. This is a particular threat to the safety of women. Female sports teams would be forced to accept men who identify as women, as would female prisons, locker rooms, bathrooms, shelters, and salons. This leaves women of all ages, but especially young girls, vulnerable

to abuse. Any boy could claim to identify as a girl, walk into a public school female locker room, expose himself to young women, and get away with it. We used to call that sexual harassment. Now it's called equality.

Put simply, there is nothing inclusive, fair, or just about the Equality Act. Its only goal is to make the Left's radical ideas about sex the new legal standard. And to do this, the bill would trample religious rights and force the rest of the country to go along with it. Lawmakers must reject it soundly.

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Source:

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