



H.R. 5: A Direct Assault on Religious Freedom and Life

February 23, 2021

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Republican Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Leader McCarthy:

In 1993, Rep. Chuck Schumer (D-NY) was the principal House sponsor of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA). It passed the House by unanimous consent and the Senate by a 97-3 vote. President Bill Clinton signed RFRA into law.

H.R. 5, the euphemistically-named “Equality Act” would gut RFRA and unleash a direct assault on religious freedom and the sanctity of human life. Sec. 1107 of H.R. 5 states:

“The Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993 ([42 U.S.C. 2000bb](#) et seq.) shall not provide a claim concerning, or a defense to a claim under, a covered title, or provide a basis for challenging the application or enforcement of a covered title.”

This provision would strip RFRA protection from religious believers in the following types of cases:

- A religious order (e.g., Little Sisters of the Poor) declines to include coverage for abortifacients in its health insurance plan.
- A doctor or nurse declines to participate in the performance of an elective abortion.
- An adoption agency places children with parents who share their beliefs and values.
- A wedding planner or photographer declines to participate in a same-sex ceremony.

These are just a few examples of H.R. 5’s adverse impact on religious believers. The bill would also jeopardize the Hyde Amendment and other limitations on taxpayer funding of abortion – making religious believers and other conscientiously-opposed taxpayers complicit in the performance of millions of elective abortions.

On behalf of the 500 clergy the Center for Urban Renewal and Education (CURE) represents and the more than 500,000 precious people of their congregations, we urge you to oppose H.R. 5 as an unprecedented assault on religious freedom and innocent human life. The nearly unanimous, bipartisan consensus for religious freedom that was exhibited by the 103rd Congress and a Democratic president should not be wiped away by this ill-advised bill.

Sincerely,

Star Parker
President

Marty Dannenfelser
Director of Governmental Relations

Rev. Tim Latiff
Director of Clergy Cent

Bishop David A. Richey
Gulf Coast Christian Center
Mobile, Alabama

Pastor Kenneth Fontenot
Bethel Baptist Church
Wilson, North Carolina

Apostle Arthur and Charlotte McGuire
Joshua Christian Ministries
Dayton, Ohio

Pastor Walter Moss
New Life Ministry
Canton, Ohio

Pastor Ceasar LeFlore
The Beloved Community
South Holland, Illinois

Pastor Sean Tucker
Hudson, Ohio

Dr. Johnny Hunter, DD
Cliffdale Community Church
Fayetteville, North Carolina