



Protect Pastors - Pass SB 2065 by Rep. Sanford

- Pastor/Clergy Protection Act, SB 2065, protects the religious freedom rights of clergy, ministers, pastors and churches in Texas as it relates to marriage.
- SB 2065 ensures that the government may not force a pastor, a clergy member, or church to perform a marriage or related ceremony that would violate their sincerely held religious beliefs.
- SB 2065 leaves unchanged the role of the state government in issuing marriage licenses.
- SB 2065 leaves unchanged state law regarding the definition or limitations on who can apply for a government marriage license.
- SB 2065 makes it clear that the government cannot use civil or criminal action as a means of punishment on this issue.
- SB 2065 has already passed the Texas Senate by a bipartisan vote.

***Supported by:** Texas Catholic Conference, Southern Baptist of Texas Convention, Baptist General Convention of Texas, Texas Pastor Council, Houston Area Pastor Council, the Coalition of African American Pastors, leaders of “Cowboy Churches”, members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, Pastor Jack Graham of Prestonwood Baptist Church, Pastor Tony Evans of Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship, the “Houston 5” Pastors, Pastor Robert Jeffress of First Baptist Dallas, Danny Forshee of Great Hills Baptist Church of Austin, Rev. Bob Jones (Corpus Christi) of the Texas Black Clergy Network, Pastor Hernan Castano of Iglesia Rios de Aceite of Houston, Texas, Pastor Mark Gonzales of the Hispanic Action Network, Concerned Women for America, Texas Values Action, Pastor Steve Branson of San Antonio and over 40 different pastors and church leaders in support of SB 2065.

***Gov. Greg Abbott has publicly voiced his support for SB 2065.**

***The Pastor Protection Act has bi-partisan support. HB 3567, a companion to SB 2065, has 87 authors, including 3 Democrats;**

- Christian pastors in Houston (Houston 5) recently had their sermons subpoenaed by the Mayor for discussions related to the biblical view of marriage and sexuality on church property.
- Oral arguments at the U.S. Supreme Court a few weeks ago on a marriage case revealed that it is unclear if specific protection exists for pastors on this issue in the future. One of the U.S. Supreme Court Justices expressed his concern over whether or not pastors/clergy had protection under the First Amendment on this issue when it is not written in law specifically.

About Texas Values Action

Texas Values Action is the advocacy arm of Texas Values, a non-profit organization dedicated to standing for faith, family, and freedom in Texas. More information is available at txvaluesaction.org.

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