Protecting Your Ministry

Thomas S. Brandon, Jr., Esq.

Whitaker Chalk Swindle & Schwartz, PLLC

301 Commerce St., Ste. 3500

Fort Worth, TX 76102

(817) 878-0532







The Current Legal Landscape:

Same-Sex Marriage





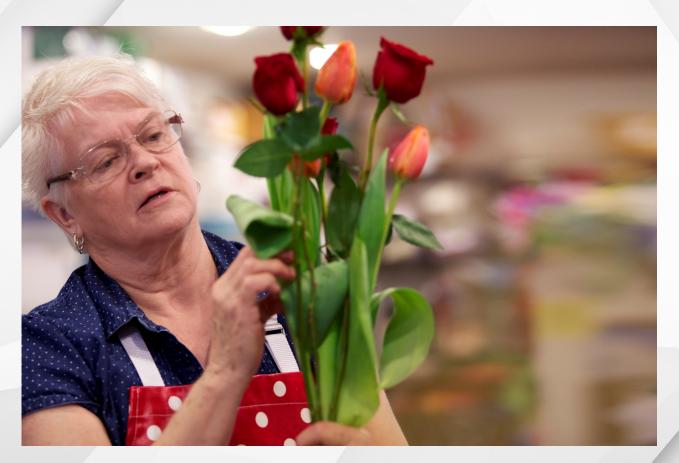
The Current Legal Landscape:

Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity Laws

Sexual orientation, gender identity laws ("SOGIs") make it

- illegal
- for businesses or public places
- to treat people differently ("discriminate")
- based on sexual orientation or gender identity.







Barronelle Stutzman

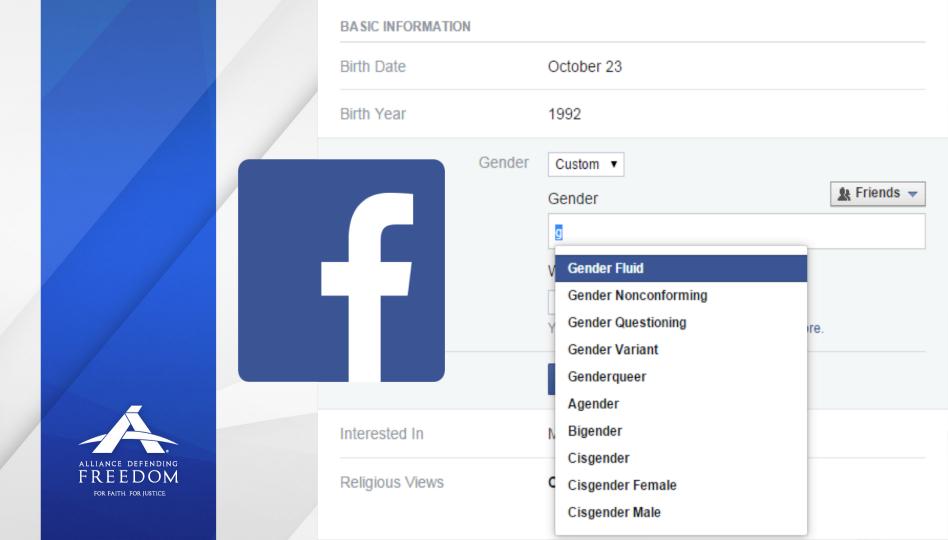




Donald & Evelyn Knapp







SOGIs Nationwide



Litigation Progression

Christian Businesses

Christian Ministries

Churches





The Church's Response:

Preparation



Strategies to Protect Your Church

- 1. Statement on Marriage/Gender
- 2. Religious Employment Criteria
- 3. Facility Use Policy
- 4. Formal Membership Policy
- 5. Marriage Policy



(1) Statement on Marriage/Gender

We believe that ...

- God created marriage to be exclusively the union of one man and one woman, and that intimate sexual activity is to occur exclusively within this union.
- God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as either male or female, and that these two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God



(2) Religious Employment Criteria

- Require all employees to sign statement of faith
- Establish religious job descriptions



(3) Facility Use Policy

- Identify the religious purpose of the building & restrict facility use to those acting consistent with your beliefs
- Detailed application/approval process
- Facility use guidelines
- Fee



(4) Formal Membership Policy

- Procedures for becoming a church member
- Procedures for church member discipline
- Procedures for disassociating from church membership



(5) Marriage Policy

Because God has ordained marriage and defined it as the covenant relationship between a man, a woman, and Himself, [the church] will only recognize marriages between a biological man and a biological woman...





The Church's Response:

Rebuilding a
Marriage
Culture



