



## Stopping the “Equality Act”: Key Points and Steps to Take

### What is the Equality Act and why should I care?

The Equality Act (H.R. 5 / S. 393) is a bill in Congress that supporters claim is necessary to protect people who self-identify as LGBT from discrimination. All people should be treated with respect, sensitivity, and compassion. In truth, people who identify as LGBT have often suffered unjust discrimination. We Catholics should consider how we can build a more just society for all people. However, the bill would do much more harm than good, to Catholics and non-Catholics alike. Here are some examples, both of direct effects and of other possible consequences that some advocates, courts, and government agencies could create when they interpret and enforce the Act:

- It would likely require **taxpayers to fund elective abortions**, because of the way it redefines “sex” discrimination.
- It would also likely force doctors and hospitals to **perform abortions** even if it’s against their conscience or beliefs.
- It would likely require all employers with more than 14 employees, even religious organizations, to **cover abortions** in their health insurance plans.
- It would restrict people who are struggling with their gender – including **children and teens** who are experiencing this at skyrocketing rates with great social pressure – from accessing needed help in loving themselves and their bodies; and would instead falsely present life-altering attempts to change sex as their *only* social and medical option.
- It would mandate that **doctors and counselors** – who help everyone in need regardless of their identifying as LGBT or otherwise – now perform and promote life-altering gender “transitions,” even when they do not think it is in the best interests of their patient.
- It would require even **religious organizations** to cover gender “transition” procedures in their employee health insurance plans, and to retain employees who publicly contradict the organization’s core mission and identity as a ministry of faith.
- It would force girls and women to compete against males in **school sports**, which takes away limited positions on women’s teams and opportunities for college scholarships.
- It would force girls and women to share **locker rooms, gym showers, restrooms, and dorms** with males who self-identify as girls or women.
- It would force vulnerable, sometimes traumatized, girls and women in **shelters** or social services programs to share sleeping, shower, and other spaces with men (and many religious charities that disagree would be shut down).
- It could force women’s **prisons** to be open to men who self-identify as women.
- It would shut down **Catholic foster care and adoption agencies**, which have helped children in need for over a century without discrimination, just for protecting the children’s rights to be in a home with a married mother and father.

- It would mandate that **schools** fully embrace and impose some children’s “gender identity” on other children (in conversations, restrooms, etc.), likely punishing children who disagree.
- It could make schools change their curriculum to falsely **teach children** that they can change their sex, and that doing so and that having same-sex sexual relationships are the only way for some of them to be healthy.
- It could close **Catholic girls’ schools and boys’ schools** or make them co-ed.
- It could put **parents’ custody over their own children** at risk by sending a powerful signal to the state governments that the only kind of people fit to be parents are those who give unquestioning affirmation to even sudden appearances of LGBT self-identification.
- It would force **small businesspeople**, such as wedding or event vendors and custom product makers, to support events that violate their beliefs or be put out of business.
- It could force some **church-owned halls** and properties to host same-sex ceremonies and other events that violate the venues’ faith, and require them to open restrooms to the opposite sex.
- It would reinforce already-mounting efforts to strip churches, and religious schools, hospitals, and other charities, of their **federal tax exemptions** on the basis that their beliefs on marriage, sex, and gender are mere bigotry.
- It would prohibit **free and truthful speech** by requiring everyone to use others’ “preferred pronouns” and show other support for gender “transition” in workplaces, schools, and more.
- The Equality Act attacks **religious freedom** by making itself a special exception to the bipartisan Religious Freedom Restoration Act, which has never been done before.

It would, in sum, make people reject the **truth** that human beings are created male and female, with the family formed by a married couple as the first building block of society.

### What can I do about it right now?

**Contact your U.S. Senators** on social media, via email, or by phone today and leading up to key votes! You may do this on your own, or follow the form and sample here:

<https://www.voterveice.net/USCCB/Campaigns/80967/Respond>.

### Where can I learn more about these issues?\*

For resources on the Equality Act: <https://www.usccb.org/equality-act>.

For medical, theological, and parental information on addressing “gender identity”:

<https://personandidentity.com/>.

For stories and resources on protecting faith-based foster care and adoption: <https://keepkidsfirst.com/>.

For select stories of people hurt by policies similar to the Equality Act: <https://www.adflegal.org/blog/marriage-family>; <https://www.adflegal.org/selina-soule-track-athlete-story>; et al.

\*These websites are for reference only. Not all of the sources cited are materials of USCCB.