

Recipient: Gov. Janice Brewer, State Sen. Andy Biggs, State Rep. Kelly Townsend, State Rep. Chad Campbell, State Rep. David Gowan, State Rep. Rick Gray, State Rep. Andy Tobin, State Rep. Bruce Wheeler, State Sen. Adam Driggs, State Sen. Steve Gallardo, and State Sen. John McComish

Letter: Greetings,

We are a collection of individual members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints who strongly oppose SB 1062. As Mormons, we feel a call to “mourn with those that mourn... comfort those that stand in need of comfort” and protect the persecuted from persecution. (Mosiah 18) We express sadness that many LGBTQ individuals, even in our own community, have endured significant pain when encountering conflicting beliefs, misunderstanding, and often fear from Latter-Day Saints. We are appalled to see this fear codified into Arizona statute under the guise of protecting religious freedom.

In 1838, Missouri Governor Lilburn Boggs issued an Extermination Order declaring that “the Mormons must be treated as enemies, and must be exterminated from the State.” We were violently forced out of our homes, many of us killed. We were unpopular, part of a minority, and unable to fight for fair and equal treatment. We lived in a country founded on freedom of religion, but were not permitted to practice our own. The only way to survive was for us to flee to the West, with many eventually settling in the Arizona we live in today.

As Mormons, our religious freedoms were undeniably threatened by Governor Boggs. Thus, we strongly feel we should be able to exercise and protect our own religious rights. However, it is also in our culture not to use government to impose our will on anyone who worships differently. We echo the words of our founding prophet, Joseph Smith.

“We claim the privilege of worshiping Almighty God according to the dictates of our own conscience, and allow all men the same privilege, let them worship how, where, or what they may.” (Articles of Faith)

“We do not believe it just to mingle religious influence with civil government, whereby one religious society is fostered and another proscribed in its spiritual privileges, and the individual rights of its members, as citizens, denied.” D&C 134:9

It is not our place to judge others. Nor is it our place to cast our own beliefs on to those who see differently than we do. This bill, however, allows us and others to do just that. We are sensitive to the desire to protect religious freedom, but these amendments are missing the mark. The amended language in SB 1062 is unnecessarily vague and goes to the extreme, especially in transitioning protection of religious freedom from individuals and religious institutions to corporations, trusts, and other associations. It is our strong opinion that beyond the intent to protect religious freedoms, this bill reflects fear and misunderstanding, opening the door for discrimination in the name of religious freedom. Religious freedom should be a protected right for everyone, but it should never usurp the right of any human being. For this reason, we add our voice in asking for a veto of SB 1062.

# Signatures

Name	Location	Date
Bryan KH	Phoenix, AZ, United States	2014-02-25
Nathaniel Curtis	Phoenix, AZ, United States	2014-02-25
Kris Fielding	San Tan Valley, AZ, United States	2014-02-25
Anissa Rasheta	Gilbert, AZ, United States	2014-02-25
Andre Sprague	mesa, AZ, United States	2014-02-25
Jake Abhau	Gilbert, AZ, United States	2014-02-25
DaNelle Wolford	Gilbert, AZ, United States	2014-02-25
Kyle Boyd	SANDY, UT, United States	2014-02-25
Kristin Wilde	Mesa, AZ, United States	2014-02-25
Bryce Cook	Mesa, AZ, United States	2014-02-25
teri carroll	Glendale, AZ, United States	2014-02-25
Paul Watson	Casa grande, AZ, United States	2014-02-25
Jessica Jones	Columbus, OH, United States	2014-02-25
Jason Deubner	Dallas, TX, United States	2014-02-25
Andrew Fluckiger	Provo, UT, United States	2014-02-25
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Kaitlan Findling	Mesa, AZ, United States	2014-02-25
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Brian Garff	Wake Forest, NC, United States	2014-02-26
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Deb Hardy	Chandler, AZ, United States	2014-02-26
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Jared Taylor	Sacramento, CA, United States	2014-02-26
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Tanner Cook	Mesa, AZ, United States	2014-02-26
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Craig Burns	Fairview, UT, United States	2014-02-26
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