

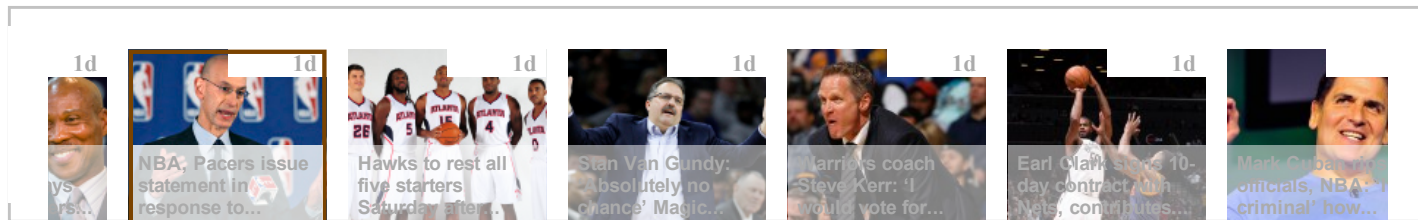
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[NBA, Pacers issue statement in response to Indiana's Religious Freedom Restoration Act law](#)

[Brett Pollakoff](#)

Mar 28, 2015, 6:30 PM EDT

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AP

The NBA and the Indiana Pacers released a joint statement on Saturday in regard to the Religious Freedom Restoration Act that was recently signed into law in Indiana.

The official release:

“The game of basketball is grounded in long established principles of inclusion and mutual respect. We will continue to ensure that all fans, players and employees feel welcome at all NBA and WNBA events in Indiana and elsewhere.”

Additionally, Pacers owner Herb Simon stated:

“The Indiana Pacers, Indiana Fever and Bankers Life Fieldhouse have the strongest possible commitment to inclusion and non-discrimination on any basis. Everyone is always welcome at Bankers Life Fieldhouse. That has always been the policy from the very beginning of the Simon

family's involvement and it always will be."

The reason for the release is that the legislation has been widely criticized as one that could legalize discrimination.

From [the Huffington Post](#):

Indiana Gov. Mike Pence (R) quietly signed legislation Thursday that could legalize discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender individuals.

The Religious Freedom Restoration Act would allow any individual or corporation to [cite its religious beliefs](#) as a defense when sued by a private party. But many opponents of the bill, which included business leaders, argued that it could open the door to widespread discrimination. Business owners who don't want to serve same-sex couples, for example, could now have legal protections to discriminate.

This was a smart decision by the league to take a proactive approach, and make it publicly clear that it won't be a part of anything that is discriminatory in nature — no matter what the law allows.

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26 Comments ([Feed for Comments](#))

1. [jimatmad](#) - Mar 28, 2015 at 7:24 PM

Time to pull all pro sports teams out of Indiana.

The NCAA is thinking of leaving. The NFL is looking at removing the Combine from Indianapolis.

College teams should be allowed to opt out of any games where they feel legalized discrimination might occur.

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o [mazblast](#) - Mar 29, 2015 at 12:17 AM

I don't know about pulling pro sports teams out of Indiana. Notre Dame football is such a large part of northern Indiana's economy...

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■ [Kevin S.](#) - Mar 29, 2015 at 8:10 AM

Fourteen people are unfunny sticks who clearly can't appreciate humor.

8 5 Rate This

■ [jimeejohnson](#) - Mar 29, 2015 at 10:18 AM

A lot more than that.

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2. Kansachusetts - Mar 28, 2015 at 8:04 PM

It is not sufficient for the NBA and the Pacers to say that THEY don't discriminate, and to continue doing business as usual as other bigot businesses begin to take advantage of this law and discriminate against Pacer fans and employees and the larger population. This is a big deal. The statement is good, but they need to go further.

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3. loubearkane - Mar 28, 2015 at 8:46 PM

Well said NBA

NFL..... Your turn

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4. [gomybirdsgo](#) - Mar 28, 2015 at 8:46 PM

Why can't all you christian maniacs just go back to the desert you came from. Leave the rest of us alone.

148 78 Rate This
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o [libertyman62](#) - Mar 28, 2015 at 10:25 PM

Christians come from AMERICA. WE built this nation. The Constitution itself mentions the Founders' *belief* in the Lordship of Jesus Christ — it's in the last paragraph of the Constitution.

Maybe YOU should be the one who leaves. Don't let the door hit you on your way out.

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■ [zackd2](#) - Mar 28, 2015 at 11:51 PM

Lol mind blown

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■ [imwhitewolf](#) - Mar 28, 2015 at 11:59 PM

this country was founded so EVERY ONE could come here and be free from religious persecution. it was NEVER founded to be a Christian country. you DID NOT build it. it was built by men/women, white/black/Asian, etc.

we are fed up with you right wing, Bible thumping extremists. you are no better than the Taliban, A-Q, or ISIS.

131 42 Rate This

■ [zickhead](#) - Mar 29, 2015 at 12:04 AM

Technically Jesus came from the Middle East and is middle eastern.

91 8 Rate This

■ [dubdubs15](#) - Mar 29, 2015 at 1:00 AM

Technically there is no first person documentation of Jesus. Technically(legally)he did not exist.

55 29 Rate This

■ [genericcommenter](#) - Mar 29, 2015 at 12:34 PM

Hey, anti-liberty man, if you want to claim ownership as the group responsible for slaughtering Indians and using slave labor to build the country, I'll let you have it.

12 1 Rate This

■ [gomybirdsgo](#) - Mar 29, 2015 at 7:36 PM

the "lordship" is that the band that did "We built this city" ?? :p Sir you should read some history. They used the word creator. Your mom could be your creator. You should seriously stop. Religion has made you stupid.

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5. [patfic5](#) - Mar 28, 2015 at 8:52 PM

Waaaaah. That's all I hear. Don't shop there. Get over it.

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6. [memphisjerry](#) - Mar 28, 2015 at 9:45 PM

I guess than the Utah Jazz, Phoenix Suns, Dallas Mavericks, San Antonio Spurs, Oklahoma City Thunder, New Orleans Pelicans, Orlando Magic, Miami Heat, Memphis Grizzlies, Philadelphia 79ers, and Chicago Bulls all will have to relocate since all the states these teams are in have the same laws.

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o [libertyman62](#) - Mar 28, 2015 at 10:06 PM

Who'da think that Obama's home State of IL (or is it Kenya?) would have a law that respected the religious beliefs of its citizens & did not force them to disavow their beliefs over politically-correct topics?

I'm sure that is going to change soon.

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▪ [braddavery](#) - Mar 29, 2015 at 2:58 AM

And the rights of those affected by this travesty of American history? Oh, that's right. Their rights don't matter. This situation is a joke, just like using a peaceful religion that preaches acceptance as an excuse for vile, bigoted hate-mongering. You'll get yours, I promise you that.

41 12 Rate This

7. [braddavery](#) - Mar 29, 2015 at 2:52 AM

I see this going very well for Indiana. I'll get the popcorn ready.

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8. ProBasketballPundit - Mar 29, 2015 at 8:44 AM

It's amazing how this country has turned on business owners. All of a sudden the 1% are evil oppressors and business owners don't have any rights to choose their customers.

If you want to talk about who built this country, well.... it wasn't the entitled crybaby customers.

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o [braddavery](#) - Mar 29, 2015 at 10:37 AM

Choose customers? Other than segregation, when has "choosing customers" ever been a thing. You a big segregation guy?

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o Professor Fate - Mar 29, 2015 at 10:41 AM

I'll ignore your idiotic and unsubstantiated first paragraph as being unworthy of response, but I'm curious to find out how a business owner could build anything at all without customers. Where do you suppose a business' money comes from?

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9. [libertyman62](#) - Mar 28, 2015 at 10:19 PM

Cry me a river. The people of IN have a basic right, just like all Americans do, of having their religious views respected & that they not be forced to violate them.

78 185 Rate This
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10. [dubdubs15](#) - Mar 28, 2015 at 10:48 PM

Have you ever heard of the constitution? Your right to be a bigot will not be taken from you. Your bigoted beliefs however, if they infringe upon others rights, can and should be truncated. Religious rights is a cop out, bigotry is what gov Pence is after.

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11. ProBasketballPundit - Mar 29, 2015 at 8:41 AM

@dubdubs15 you clearly haven't read the constitution. It doesn't guarantee anybody the right to patronize a business. All rights in that case belong to the business owner. Your only right is to boycott the business if you don't like their practices.

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12. [dubdubs15](#) - Mar 29, 2015 at 7:12 PM

What about the employees and their rights working at these religious(bigoted) companies? The constitution does not apply? The constitution is certainly open for interpretation, and with 5 of them(supremes) being hard line right wing, there is some validity to your point. In my opinion however the constitutionality of this new law is questionable at best.

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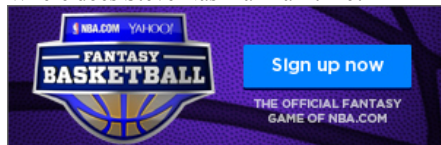
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