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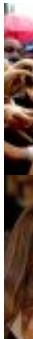
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HOUSE REPUBLICANS PUSH FOR NEW RELIGIOUS FREEDOM BILL: FIRST AMENDMENT DEFENSE ACT

17 15 JUL 2015 POSTED BY ALISON LESLEY



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THE **FIRST AMENDMENT DEFENSE ACT**, WOULD PROTECT CHURCHES, CHARITIES AND PRIVATE SCHOOLS FROM BEING PUNISHED BY THE GOVERNMENT FOR OPPOSING **SAME-SEX MARRIAGE**.

Following the U.S. [Supreme Court](#)'s same-sex marriage ruling, **Republicans in the House of Representatives are pushing for a new bill to secure First Amendment protections for religious Americans.**

The bill, written by Rep. Raul Labrador (R-Idaho) and dubbed the First Amendment Defense Act, would protect churches, charities and private schools from being punished by the government for opposing same-sex marriage, [the Townhall.com reports](#).

The bill has already 115 supporters, including prominent Republicans such as Allen Lucas "Luke" Messer (R-Indiana), William "Bill" Flores (R-Texas) and Majority Whip Steve Scalise (R-Louisiana).

It has been compared to the 1993 [Religious Freedom Restoration Act](#), which the Congress passed after the Supreme Court upheld Oregon's right to deny unemployment benefits to two Native Americans who had been fired for using a

certain drug as part of religious ceremony. Now the Congress, however, seems to be preparing for possible legal battles about [religious freedom](#) because of the same-sex marriage ruling.

For now, only one Democrat, Rep. Dan Lapinski (D-Illinois), has sponsored the bill. That's why it's unclear whether the bill can gain bipartisan support.

It's speculated that the bill is against the liberal view that religious liberty, and the free exercise of religion in particular, could result in discrimination towards LGBT individuals. **The Republicans say that the bill guarantees that public actors such as schools, hospitals, charities, and individuals cannot be denied tax exemptions, federal grants or other normal privileges simply because they exercise their religion.**

In the aftermath of the Supreme Court's same-sex marriage ruling, there's an escalating debate in America about the ramifications of the decision. Most of the debate is focused on how the Supreme Court's ruling correlates with religious freedom.

RESOURCES

- [Townhall](#)

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TAGS: First Amendment Defense Act, Native American, Religious Freedom Restoration Act, same-sex marriage, Supreme Court

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