



Businesses could deny services for gay weddings under new legislation



Under House Bill 296, business owners and employees would not have to provide goods or services for engagement parties, weddings or other activities related to same-sex marriages. (Lisa DeJong, The Plain Dealer)



By **Jackie Borchardt, Northeast Ohio Media Group**

[Email the author](#) | [Follow on Twitter](#)

on August 06, 2015 at 3:25 PM, updated August 06, 2015 at 6:55 PM

[Print](#)
[Email](#)

COLUMBUS, Ohio -- Ohio lawmakers have introduced a bill that would allow businesses to deny providing services for same-sex weddings, which gay rights advocates say is worse than controversial Indiana legislation that drew criticism from across the country.

Under **House Bill 296**, business owners and employees would not have to provide goods or services for engagement parties, weddings or other activities related to same-sex marriages. The brief, five-paragraph long bill states that not providing services is not equal to discrimination.

The bill's sponsor, Rep. Ron Young, a Leroy Township Republican, said the bill is intended to let people who sincerely feel that participating in a same-sex ceremony hurts their conscience to opt out.

"[Businesses] hate to turn down revenue and most people wouldn't have opposition to participating in same-sex weddings, but I think if people choose, based upon religious or conscientious objections, they should have the opportunity to not participate," Young

GOP presidential candidates

Get to know the Republican candidates seeking the nomination for president



Find candidate bios, positions & more ... [Click here»](#)

Conservative enough? Jeb Bush's Right Angle

said, adding that he doesn't think it would be a popular option.

The U.S. Supreme Court **ruled in June that same-sex couples have a constitutional right to marry**. Lisa Wurm of the American Civil Liberties Union of Ohio said House Bill 296 is a step backward for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender Ohioans who now can marry their partners but are not protected by state anti-discrimination laws.

Wurm said freedom of religion is already protected by the U.S. Constitution, making further legislation unnecessary.

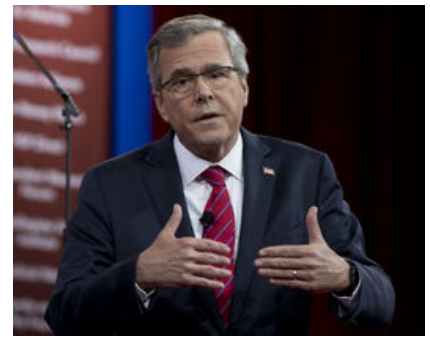
"The ACLU knows a thing or two about freedom of religion," Wurm said. "If this was an issue, we would certainly not be afraid to side with Rep. Young and the co-sponsors of the bill. But the freedom of religion doesn't give any of us the right to harm others, which is what this legislation would do."

Wurm said Young's bill is more targeted toward gay people than Indiana's Religious Freedom Act, which caused national uproar earlier this year after critics said it would allow discrimination. Indiana lawmakers rushed to amend the bill to add protections for LGBT people after several companies threatened to move their businesses out of the state.

Although there are no federal or state protections for sexual orientation in Ohio, about two dozen Ohio cities have passed anti-discrimination ordinances under which violators can be fined.

Young said that's wrong, and that forcing vendors to provide services is a form of discrimination.

"Carving out this space is reasonable," Young said. "It doesn't hurt the same sex couple that wants to marry. They can certainly find a service elsewhere."



An in-depth look at just how far right Jeb Bush leans.

Terri Schiavo and the brink of constitutional crisis

That time he sought a guardian for the fetus of a disabled rape victim

A privatizing, charter school-founding 'Veto' Corleone

Tea Party suspicions will present a 2016 challenge

Slideshow: Analysis of Jeb Bush

[More Election News »](#)

Politics Features

Editorials and political columnists

Follow us on Twitter

Find complete election results

 Real Estate Lindsay Davis	FOR SALE Painesville Township, OH	FOR RENT Parma Heights, OH
		

Tweet { 25 } Share { 464 }  Share { 0 } [Reddit](#)

Related Stories



GOP here for debates; high infant mortality rate in Ohio; bill encourages gay discrimination: Top 5 at 5



Same-sex couples are no threat to religious freedom: Letter to the Editor

619 comments

[Sign in](#)

Most Read



Johnny Manziel excels in Browns scrimmage: quick hitters



Cleveland Indians trade Nick Swisher, Michael Bourn to Atlanta Braves for Chris Johnson



GOP Early Debate: Highlights from the 5 pm Fox News debate in Cleveland




2015 Bridgestone Invitational leaderboard, live streaming, TV schedule, tee times, updates




Joe Thomas: Johnny Manziel has proved 'he's ready to be an NFL starting quarterback'

			Post comment as...
--	--	--	--------------------


Newest | Oldest

 **dougal** 2 days ago
 I believe the law allows owners of 4 or fewer apartments to discriminate in selecting tenants also. It's not pretty, but it's not too harmful either so long as many alternative sources are available..


Like Reply

 **Chivel** 2 days ago
 They'll sell you a wedding cake if you've had an abortion or voted for Obama, but they won't sell you a cake if you're gay.
 These screwballs need to get this straightened out.


Like Reply

 **EastSideJohnny** 2 days ago
 @Chivel So are you saying they should also deny to abortionists and Obama voters? Or should they sell gay wedding cakes?


1 Like Reply

 **Chivel** 20 hours ago
 @EastSideJohnny Yes


Like Reply

 **Alexthagreat** 2 days ago
 Same sex couples are no threat to religious freedom, this is blatant discrimination. Any business that is open to the public does not have the right to pick and choose who they serve, that is the law, and if violated you will face legal action. If you want to pick and choose, you will simply need to change your business status to private. Sell your services at your church, for members only. Bigots only hurt themselves.


1 Like Reply

 **jeremy123** 2 days ago
 @Alexthagreat
 You seem to want to control what other people can or can't do. Your dogma tells free humans what they can or cannot do. Such control freak bigotry over free human beings who are minding their own business and doing nothing to harm anyone is the antithesis of tolerance.


Like Reply

 **Alexthagreat** 2 days ago
 @jeremy123 @Alexthagreat I'm simply stating the facts, and should you choose to violate any persons right to equal protection you will face legal action. It's not my dogma, it's the law.

Like Reply

 **Tell It How It Is** 2 days ago
 @Alexthagreat @jeremy123
 So is the 1st amendment.

Like Reply

 **icbucket** 11 hours ago
 That's actually not the le here in Utah, so you can take your pathetic dogma elsewhere thx

Like Reply

Active Discussions

- 1** Live updates and chat: Cleveland Indians vs. Minnesota Twins at 7:10 p.m., Game No. 109 (526 comments)
- 2** Johnny Manziel narrowing the gap, but Josh McCown still on pace to start: Mary Kay Cabot (337 comments)
- 3** Cleveland Pride Parade a big draw (photos) (47 comments)
- 4** Bay Village bank robbed (photos) (20 comments)
- 5** Downtown building catches fire (23 comments)

See more comments »



freshdirect.
\$50 OFF
 CODE: MELON50
 SHOP NOW >

Play with



BFanJcar

2 days ago

Well, this would be dumb, but whatever.

2 Like Reply



debbi

2 days ago

For too long America has tried to accomodate sexual perversion. But those who choose to live this lifestyle kept pushing their agenda on the rest of us. DADT, the boy scouts, now the perversion of marriage. Time to push back!

Like Reply



pbluzz

2 days ago

@debbi Gay people have a right to be who they are, and people who find their behavior have a right to feel the way they do.

How about we all just tolerate one another?

Notice I didn't say accept one another, because that's an entirely different thing.

1 Like Reply



pbluzz

2 days ago

@debbi "and people who find their behavior to be wrong..."

Like Reply



BFanJcar

2 days ago

@debbi I forgot when anyone forced me to be gay, did that actually happen? LOL

Like Reply



Alexthagreat

2 days ago

@debbi accommodate sexual perversion, I'd like to know who crowned you queen of love.

Like Reply



weson102

2 days ago

Can African-American caterers refuse to service a KKK wedding reception? If this doesn't pass will a Jewish catering service be forced to work a Nazi Party celebrating the anniversary of the opening of Auschwitz concentration camp?

Listen, I'm for Gay marriage and, though not as severe as the above examples, gay marriage opponents have rights as Americans.

2 Like Reply



pbluzz

2 days ago

I see that the disscussion has somehow been manipulated to compare the discrimination against black people and gay people as the same thing.

While I see the argument as being somewhat valid, there's a small detail that we're not discussing.

You can hide the fact that you're gay when it's convenient.

Not so much, well, actually, never, when you're black.

If I had to guess I'd say the average gay person wouldn't want to do business with a company who would refuse service based on their personal beliefs (which, unless I'm mistaken, everyone is entitled to); it's the radical "gay rights" movement who wants to force acceptance over tolerance.

1 Like Reply



newkidontheblog007

2 days ago

Wesson didn't say refuse to serve blacks. Wesson said "Can African American caterers refuse service to a KKK wedding....." Just pointing that out, in case you misunderstood.

Good question, albeit exaggerated.

Like Reply





jeremy123

2 days ago

Who is trying to control and manipulate the behavior of free humans harming nobody: The gay bullies

Who is just trying to mind their own business, live and let live, and not trying to control anyone: The bakers.

Those claiming to be the most tolerant are the least, and are control freaks.

Those accused of being intolerant are not hurting anyone and are minding their own business, and are perfectly fine with others living their own lives.

Kind of clear who the fascists are in this picture.

Unclear how this behavior helps the cause of the fascists. What, we're supposed to feel sorry for them?

3 Like Reply



greygran

2 days ago

@jeremy123 somehow you are imagining that's how it went.

Like Reply



newkidontheblog007

2 days ago

A bit dramatic, Jeremy.

Like Reply



jeremy123

2 days ago

@newkidontheblog007

Dramatic for the sake of making a point perhaps, but accurate and with the same conclusion.

Like Reply



HausWolf

2 days ago

@jeremy123

You don't know what the word fascist means, do you?

Like Reply



Beanie-witness to Norv Turner's ear being bit off

2 days ago

GOP just can't get this right. They all should have had out notepads when Kasich answered his "if your child was gay" question. Nobody is saying you have to agree with homosexuality or support it. They are saying you can treat gay people as humans. Carry on hating people in the name of God though.

1 Like Reply



daycleve

2 days ago

That's part of the reason Kasich is my candidate. Social conservatives make it so hard to vote my economic interests

1 Like Reply



Carol Bannon

2 days ago

Gay community activists are constantly looking for someone to sue, for someone to call a *bigot* -

Freedom of Association means just that - we are free to associate and do business with those we want to do business with as long as there is no harm done to that person. Baker A doesn't want to bake your cake? Go to Baker B, or C, or D. THEY will take your money.

I say grow up - not everyone you meet is going to like you, agree with you, want to be your friend. Walk away, and forget it. Get on with your life.

Remember when you cried as a kid because no one wanted to play with you? You mom and dad didn't go and sue. They told you to go find someone else to play with. People are too darn quick to play the 'bigot' card just because others don't agree with them. And its a damn sad day

in America when the 'govt' has to create a law to protect mom and pop businesses ability to say 'I don't really want your money'

4  Like Reply



Beanie-witness to Norv Turner's ear being bit off

2 days ago

@Carol Bannon still nobody touches this argument. Some people remember as a kid when they had white only drinking fountains and the black people could just go find another one. How is that any different?

Like Reply



Carol Bannon

2 days ago

@Beanie-witness to Norv Turner's ear being bit off @Carol Bannon If you can't see the difference beanie then you are truly in a sad place.

THAT was discrimination. Not taking someone's money because you disagree with their lifestyle choice is NOT. To a person who wants to grow rich, not taking money is just plain foolish. But to a person who truly says 'give your money to THAT business down the street because I don't agree with your lifestyle choice' is not.

Like Reply



Beanie-witness to Norv Turner's ear being bit off

2 days ago

@Carol Bannon @Beanie-witness to Norv Turner's ear being bit off So refusing services to someone because of being gay is a choice but choosing to serve someone due to skin tone is discrimination. Got ya. What is sad is how many people think that argument holds water.

2  Like Reply



daycleve

2 days ago

So if someone posted no Hispanics allowed or No Christians allowed that would be cool?

1  Like Reply



newkidontheblog007

2 days ago

Go back to bed.

Like Reply



Michele Adams

2 days ago

@daycleve Very good point. Choosing to be Christian is much more a decision than who you're attracted towards. They tend to profess that you must accept Christ to be Christian, and acceptance (or non-acceptance) is a choice. While it'd be stupid to not take Christian's (or anyone else's) money, under **@Carol Bannon's** argument this should be legal???

Like Reply



jeremy123

2 days ago

@Beanie-witness to Norv Turner's ear being bit off @Carol Bannon

The black experience was systematic degradation via slavery, and following that institutional violation of their everyday constitutional rights via oppression.

You cannot piggy back on the legitimate gripes of the black community. They had real civil rights out and out crushing disregard.

You have not earned the right to claim to be one of them and to have experienced the same oppression. Or, if you have, then everyone in the world that wants to whine about anything and claim poor-me self-dramatizing victimhood can claim the same thing. The bakers can claim the same thing, for goodness sake.

Sorry, your analogy is false and offensive to the majority of the black community.

Like Reply



Beanie-witness to Norv Turner's ear being bit off 2 days ago

@jeremy123 @Beanie-witness to Norv Turner's ear being bit off @Carol Bannon I guess gay people must have been happy only 15 years ago when the gym teacher kicked the ball out in the yard and said we were going to play smear the queer all period. Or how about the gay dude that was tied to the fence a few years ago in Dakotas and beat to death for being gay. I bet he enjoyed that

sorry it was Wyoming and if you are black you should be ashamed of yourself. How anyone in the black community could turn around and discriminate against another community after first hand experience of how that feels is amazing.

3 Like Reply



jeremy123 2 days ago

@Beanie-witness to Norv Turner's ear being bit off @jeremy123 @Carol Bannon

Perfect that you need to go years and years and can only find one-off examples of individuals who my have done something bad.

The black experience was universal and institutional. The oppression was across the board just for their appearance, not their thought or behavior or opinion. It lasted decade after decade.

That you need to find some isolated cases where a couple of bad people, representing only themselves, did bad things only underscores the weakness of the attempt to jump on the black civil rights band wagon.

Look, make our own case, fine. But pretending this is akin to the civil rights movement is a joke. No one ever enslaved gays. No one ever systematically denied their right to vote.

1 Like Reply



greygran 2 days ago

@jeremy123 @Beanie-witness to Norv Turner's ear being bit off @Carol Bannon you're exaggerating.

Like Reply



Alexthagreat 2 days ago

@jeremy123 @Beanie-witness to Norv Turner's ear being bit off @Carol Bannon Gays have been systematically denied the right to exist in society period, I don't understand how you don't get it.

Like Reply



Alexthagreat 2 days ago

@Beanie-witness to Norv Turner's ear being bit off @jeremy123 @Carol Bannon Beanie you are so correct.

Like Reply



OccupyThis 2 days ago

@Carol Bannon So it's okay to say "I don't want your money" to Blacks, Chinese, Native Americans, Jews, Atheists,etc. Foobar!!! This is discrimination against the LGBT community in spades.

Like Reply



newkidontheblog007 2 days ago

I see you don't have a brain occupying your head.

Like Reply



Alexthagreat 2 days ago

@Carol Bannon I think religious people are stupid, and ignorant, but if they come to my public business for service I will serve them. I'm in business to make money, and

its all green.

Like Reply



Tell It How It Is

2 days ago

How ironic, that the real bigotry is those wanting to force businesses to support their cause or else.

1 Like Reply



OccupyThis

2 days ago

Once again we see the BIGOTS in the Republican Legislature being what they are BIGOTS!

Like Reply



Tell It How It Is

2 days ago

@OccupyThis

Isn't there another word to call someone that you simply disagree with. Is everyone a bigot?

2 Like Reply



OccupyThis

2 days ago

@Tell It How It Is @OccupyThis Discriminating against the LGBT community is BIGOTRY - plain and simple.

Like Reply



Tell It How It Is

2 days ago

@OccupyThis @Tell It How It Is

Sounds like the one practicing bigotry is all you.

big·ot·ry 'bigetrē/*noun*: **bigotry**; plural noun: **bigotries**: intolerance toward those who hold different opinions from oneself."the difficulties of combating prejudice and bigotry"

Please explain how this does not apply to your own opinion that anyone that does not agree with the LGBT should lose that ability to exercise their opposition, plain and simple.

3 Like Reply



Beanie-witness to Norv Turner's ear being bit off

2 days ago

@Tell It How It Is @OccupyThis It has nothing to do with not agreeing with them. When are party constantly tries to pass legislation targeting that community to limit their rights it crosses that line

2 Like Reply



Tell It How It Is

2 days ago

@Beanie-witness to Norv Turner's ear being bit off @Tell It How It Is @OccupyThis

Oh, sure it does. The line that is crosses, as you say, is the line of bigotry and intolerance by the LCBT community.

Like Reply



JourneyForTruth

2 days ago

this is a great victory for creative artist that would not be able to work in this genre.

Like Reply



newc11

2 days ago

In what world does allowing individuals to not provide services to individuals who are entering into a same-sex marriage, not discrimination? I'd love to hear Rep. Ron Young explain this because I guarantee he cannot. It is 2015 and the majority of americans support this basic right. It is time to move on. There are far more important issues to address.

I just want to note that if a vendor/retailer informed a same-sex couple that they do not agree with their decision to get married because it 'hurts their conscience', I can pretty much guarantee that the couple would not want to do business with them. I mean, seriously, who would want to give money to these close-minded, discriminating small-minded bigots?

would want to give money to these close-minded, discriminating straight-minded bigots :

3 Like Reply



Tell It How It Is
@newc11

2 days ago

" It is 2015 and the majority of americans support this basic right"
The right to force people to work for you, really? I challenge that.

1 Like Reply



Jackie Borchardt, Northeast Ohio Media Group

2 days ago

@newc11 I asked Rep. Young the same question. His answer: It is discrimination "in a way" but the vendors and businesses also face discrimination by being forced to provide services for a ceremony that they do not support or fined for not providing services. He also said businesses who turn gay couples away would likely lose business for the reasons you mention.

Like Reply



Alexthagreat

2 days ago

@Jackie Borchardt, Northeast Ohio Media Group @newc11 And that is why this legislation should not be pass, discrimination in any "way" is wrong, and should not be accepted.

Like Reply



Tell It How It Is

2 days ago

@Alexthagreat @Jackie Borchardt, Northeast Ohio Media Group @newc11

What happened to separation of church and state? We don't need your morality forced on us. Who determines what is 'wrong'?

Like Reply

Show More Comments

Best of cleveland.com

Man identified in Akron fatal home invasion ...

Greater Cleveland attracted nearly 17 million ...

Johnny Manziel narrowing the gap, but Josh McCown ...



Powered By

PLAIN DEALER PUBLISHING CO.

NORTHEAST OHIO MEDIA GROUP

About Us

About Cleveland.com Contact Us
About Northeast Ohio Career Opportunities
Media Group FAQ
Advertise with us

Subscribe

The Plain Dealer
Sun News

Cleveland.com Sections

News Obituaries
Sports Jobs
High School Sports Autos
Entertainment Real Estate
Living Rentals
Politics Classifieds
Opinion Shopping Deals and Coupons
Local Businesses
Deals in Your Area

Your Regional News Pages

Beachwood Parma & parma Heights
Brunswick Strongsville

More on Cleveland.com

Forums Post a job
Videos Post a classified ad
Photos Sell your car
Interact with us Sell/rent your home
Weather Sitemap & search
Sponsor Content

Follow Us

Twitter | Facebook | Google+ |
Instagram | Pinterest

Subscriber Service

Media Insider Rewards
View My Profile
Report a Delivery Issue
Place a Vacation Hold
Make a Payment

Mobile

Mobile Apps

Registration on or use of this site constitutes acceptance of our [User Agreement](#) and [Privacy Policy](#)

© 2015 Northeast Ohio Media Group LLC. All rights reserved ([About Us](#)).

The material on this site may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, cached or otherwise used, except with the prior written permission of Northeast Ohio Media Group LLC.

[Community Rules](#) apply to all content you upload or otherwise submit to this site. [Contact interactivity management](#).

 [Ad Choices](#)