

## **A Resolution on the Equality Act of 2021 (H. R. 5)**

WHEREAS people of faith have witnessed a dangerous erosion of core biblical values over recent years, leading to the bipartisan passage of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA 1993) which itself, affirmed the 1964 Civil Rights Act, which in turn affirmed our constitutional rights; and

WHEREAS all men are created equal and endowed with certain inalienable rights given to them by their Creator, not the government (Gen 1:27; 9:6; Rom. 14:5-9; James 3:9,10); and

WHEREAS a comprehensive bill (H. R. 5), known as the Equality Act, which President Biden has made his top priority, is making its way through the legislative process which will certainly challenge our religious freedoms and our right to openly express disagreement with others (Matt. 14:4; II Cor. 5:10; I Tim. 5:20); and

WHEREAS unlike state and local laws forbidding discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI), the Equality Act contains no exemptions for religious organizations and others exercising their religious rights; and

WHEREAS this bill would include, for the first time ever, “sexual orientation” and “gender identity” as protected classes, enforcing a narrow government-sanctioned ideology, thereby punishing those who do not conform; and

WHEREAS the Equality Act would also expand the definition of places of “public accommodations” into areas that churches and other institutions of faith would certainly fall under; and

WHEREAS the Equality Act would force faith-based organizations and Christian employers to affirm transgenderism and same-sex marriage, contrary to their conscience and religious convictions; and

WHEREAS the Equality Act would foster government contempt and harassment towards those freely exercising their religious liberties, including independent Baptist churches,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that we, the members of the Pennsylvania Association of Regular Baptist Churches assembled at First Baptist Church of Ogden, Boothwyn, PA, on April 12-13, 2021, do hereby strongly oppose H. R. 5 as a constitutionally, and morally destructive piece of legislation, including any other bill (by any other name) with the same objective.

WE FURTHER RESOLVE to encourage our legislators not to abandon the biblical view of human sexuality held so long in our nation by supporting this legislation.

WE FINALLY RESOLVE to uphold in our personal lives, as well as our public ministries, the biblical teaching on gender and God's gift of physical intimacy (Gen. 1:27; Matt. 19:4; Mark 10:6; I Cor. 7:3; Heb. 13:4).