

2020 STATE OF THE SECULAR STATES

*A Review of State Law and Policy Affecting the
Separation of Religion and Government*





©2021 BY AMERICAN ATHEISTS. American Atheists owns all rights, title, and interest in and to this publication and all derivative works thereof. Permission for reproduction and redistribution is granted if the publication is (1) reproduced in its entirety and (2) distributed free of charge. If you would like to request use of state maps or scorecards, please contact us at states@atheists.org.



Table of Contents

- 4 INTRODUCTION TO THIS REPORT
- 6 KEY DEVELOPMENTS IN STATE LAW & POLICY IN 2020
- PARTNER PERSPECTIVE**
- 8 AN ACTIVIST SUPREME COURT RENDERS UNENFORCEABLE STATE NO AID CLAUSES
- 10 STATE LEGISLATIVE OUTLOOK FOR 2021
- 12 SELECTED NATIONAL ISSUE SUMMARY MAPS
- 20 ISSUE ANALYSIS & CATEGORIZATION
- PARTNER PERSPECTIVE**
- 23 STATE LEGISLATIVE CHANGE TO IMPROVE SEX EDUCATION
- PARTNER PERSPECTIVE**
- 24 HOMESCHOOLING LAW NEEDS REFORMS
- PARTNER PERSPECTIVE**
- 29 COUNTY SHERIFFS: TARGETS FOR CHRISTIAN NATIONALISTS
- 31 NATIONAL SUMMARY SCORECARD
- 32 STATE ASSESSMENTS & SCORECARDS
- 86 OUR ORGANIZATION & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ABOUT THIS REPORT

Introduction

To say that 2020 was a unique and challenging year is to understate how pervasively the events of this year affected every aspect of American life. The impact on state legislatures was no different. At the height of the legislative session, many states' legislatures were forced to close for months, effectively ending their productivity. Others adapted and were able to perform their legislative activities virtually. And more than a few refused to accept the reality of the pandemic and continued to meet in person, after using this opportunity to close their proceedings to the public.

Moreover, the failure of the federal government to meet the challenges of the pandemic with a national response meant that the states were left to manage the crisis on their own. This had devastating impacts on the both the economies and budgets of nearly every state. It is no surprise then that the majority of legislation passed in 2020 dealt with issues of immediate importance, including emergency budgets, responses by public schools and health systems, updated voting systems, and allocation of emergency powers. This left little room for the typical "culture war" or ideological bills meant to advance a religious agenda and undermine the separation of religion and government.

While little legislation passed in 2020 that significantly affected the separation of religion and government either positively or negatively, this state legislative session may have a lasting impact on the manner in which states conduct their legislative processes. Legislatures have learned that they can perform their responsibilities remotely, and perhaps more importantly, that this allows them to do so with little public supervision. During this pandemic, many legislatures closed their doors to the public, committees held their meetings without hearing from witnesses, and in some instances, no avenue at all was provided for meaningful public comment. At this point, it is unclear whether states will continue these practices or whether they will recover their former transparency and openness once this crisis subsides.

Although state legislation did not significantly impact religious equality in 2020, that same cannot be said for the courts. We saw fundamental changes to the law of church-state separation in the courts this year, most of it extremely negative from a separationist perspective. The U.S. Supreme Court all but struck down the numerous state constitutional protections that limit the flow of public money to religious private schools, while at the same time greatly expanding the ability of religious organizations to evade nondiscrimination protections. And the lower courts granted exemption after exemption to religious organizations, allowing them to meet even in defiance of emergency restrictions by state governors, even at risk to public health.

The fact is, we need strong advocacy for the separation of religion and government and religious equality at the state level more than ever. States can and should take steps to limit the impact of negative court decisions and to ensure that responses to the pandemic meet constitutional requirements. But that is only possible through the vigilant engagement of state-level advocates who will push lawmakers to do the right thing and hold them accountable when they fail. We cannot allow state legislatures to use social distancing to shield themselves from oversight by the people; advocates must remind them of their duty to the public and to the U.S. Constitution.

With these goals in mind, we are pleased to release the 2020 *State of the Secular States* report, a comprehensive review of state law and policy affecting the separation of religion and government and religious equality in every state, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. For each jurisdiction, we have assessed nearly 50 individual measures of relevant law, both positive and negative. This new edition of the report incorporates new measures that are especially relevant in these challenging times, including assessments of homeschooling laws and nondiscrimination laws that protect nonreligious people.

We hope that this third edition of the report continues to be a powerful tool for advocates and lawmakers, allowing them to understand the laws and policies that affect the separation of religion and government in their states and set meaningful and achievable advocacy goals. By working together, we can advance the cause of civil rights and achieve religious equality for every American.



ALISON GILL

Vice President, Legal and Policy
American Atheists

Alison Gill is Vice President for Legal and Policy at American Atheists. She leads the organization's federal and state advocacy for religious equality and litigation activities to protect the separation of religion and government. Alison is a nationally recognized expert on civil rights law and state advocacy.



ANALYSIS

Key Developments in State Law & Policy in 2020

This was an unusual year for state legislation, marked by a pandemic that forced the closure of state legislatures and U.S. Supreme Court decisions that significantly affect state law.

National Events Topped Agenda for State Legislatures

To say the least, 2020 was an unusual year for state legislation. The year was marked by national events of significant importance, many of which had a substantial effect on both the ability of state legislatures to consider bills and which bills they considered. At the start of the year, there were a number of negative bills introduced to restrict access to reproductive health care and to allow for school-based discrimination against trans students, resembling similar bills introduced in 2019. However, these efforts were mostly set aside in March as the COVID-19 pandemic began to overwhelm the country.

Across the country, the majority of state legislatures went into recess for most of their state legislative sessions. A few state legislatures continued to meet, and some even went so far as to use the pandemic as cover to pass extreme and far reaching bills outside of the public eye. Much of the legislation that was considered involved emergency funding and other pandemic responses. In May, however, just as some state legislatures were beginning to reconvene, they were again affected by national events: the murder of George Floyd and the subsequent nationwide protests. As a result of these protests and the substantial concerns raised about race, policing, and justice, many states turned their attention to legislation concerning policing, qualified immunity, and related issues.

And of course, as with any year with a presidential election, the election itself had an impact on the issues that state legislatures considered. Between these events and the fact that the majority of states are having severe budget crises as a result of the pandemic response, increased unemployment programs, and lack of taxable income, we did not see as much of the partisan, social-issue based legislation that has dominated state legislatures for the last several years. Overall, very few bills were passed this session, and those that were passed tended to be in response to the major events sweeping the nation.

Religious Exemptions from Common Sense

The COVID-19 pandemic provided cover for governors and state legislatures in more conservative states to attack reproductive freedom. For example, in states like Alabama, Iowa, Ohio, and Oklahoma, closure orders from state governors threatened to deny access to abortion by labelling it an "elective service" or limit access to reproductive health services through telemedicine. Fortunately, advocacy organizations fought, and largely defeated, these unnecessary restrictions on essential, time-sensitive care in the courts.

There were also significant disputes over the ability of state governments to close churches during the pandemic to prevent the spread of COVID-19. In about half the states, governors exempted places of worship from closure orders. In others, however, places of worship were treated like other similar organizations, such as community centers, and they were closed for public health. In these states, some churches turned to the courts to argue that they had the right to meet even during the pandemic, with mixed results. In fact, the U.S. Supreme Court weighed in on this issue multiple times. Given the differences in outcomes among circuit courts, we may likely see this issue back before the Supreme Court in the coming term. State legislatures also considered these issues. For example, the Pennsylvania House of Representatives passed a bill that would strip authority from the governor to restrict gatherings in places of worship due to the pandemic. Fortunately, this bill did not pass the state Senate.

Finally, there were an unusually large number of bills introduced in 2020 to allow health care providers to refuse to provide services based on their religious beliefs. For example, in Kentucky, an extremely broad denial of care bill that would have allowed health care providers and even insurers to refuse to provide any service that violated their beliefs. This bill actually passed the relevant Senate committee, but it ultimately failed to pass, in part due to the pandemic closures.

Imposing Religion on Public Schools

Despite the limited number of overall bills passed in 2020, in some states there were efforts to unconstitutionally impose religion on public school students. For example, Tennessee lawmakers, using the distraction of the pandemic and a tornado that ravaged the state capital, passed the broadest released time bill in history. This bill requires every public school to release any student for up to one hour per day to attend religious instruction, and it allows districts to use school buses for transportation to this religious education. Unfortunately, this scheme places a tremendous burden on school administration and classroom management, because schools and teachers would not be able to effectively plan around these interruptions. Because of the pandemic, normal school operations have been interrupted since the passage of this bill, but we will need to examine its impact once schools are again operating normally.



People in front of Los Angeles' City Hall protest the state's COVID-19 stay at home orders in a "Fully Open California" protest.

Photo by Matt Gush / Shutterstock.com

Ohio and West Virginia passed bills to ostensibly protect the right of students to exercise their religion in public schools. In fact, these bills are often associated with Project Blitz, and they can create special privileges for religious students or result in harassment for students that are nonreligious or religious minorities. In some cases, these types of bills can encourage educators to engage in religious conduct that violates the constitutional rights of their students.

Protecting Youth from Religion-Based Harm

As in previous years, there were strong efforts to pass legislation in 2020 to protect young people from harms caused by religious beliefs and practices, including bills to protect LGBTQ youth from dangerous and discredited conversion therapy, to remove existing laws which excuse child deaths due to faith healing, to protect young women and girls from female genital mutilation, and to protect minors from forced marriage. Fortunately, efforts to pass bills in several of these areas were successful, resulting in stronger protections against religiously based harm in an increasing number of states. For example, Virginia successfully passed a bill in 2020 to protect young people from harmful conversion therapy practiced by licensed medical and mental health providers.

In 2020, advocates opposing child marriage doubled the number of states that prevent children under the age of 18 from getting married in all circumstances by passing laws in Minnesota and Pennsylvania. These marriages are too often required by religious groups, and not only are they incredibly harmful to the young person's health and safety, they are difficult to nullify because minors lack the legal rights to protect themselves.

Continuing a trend from the previous year, 2020 saw the passage of several state bills to end the female genital mutilation (FGM) of girls and young women. Although FGM is often performed as a traditional or religious practice in some cultures, these procedures are very harmful, and they have no medical necessity or benefit. When a federal law addressing FGM was struck down by the courts in 2018, the onus was placed on the states to provide adequate protection. In 2020, Idaho, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Vermont, and Wyoming passed legislation to prohibit the practice of FGM on minors, bringing the total number of states with such laws to 39.

PARTNER PERSPECTIVE

An Activist Supreme Court Renders Unenforceable State No Aid Clauses

STEVEN K. GREEN, J.D., Ph.D.

Professor of Law and Director Center for Religion, Law and Democracy, Willamette University

These decisions would likely have turned out differently if a majority of the justices believed in the separation of church and state, but it is clear that they don't.

Over the last several terms, the conservative majority of the U.S. Supreme Court has been hellbent on rewriting its own church-state jurisprudence and, in the process, lowering whatever remains of Thomas Jefferson's "wall of separation." So, in *Burwell v. Hobby Lobby* (2014), the Court held (incredulously) that secular for-profit business could raise a free exercise defense to exempt themselves from following neutral regulations under the Affordable Care Act. In *Trinity Lutheran Church v. Comer* (2017), the Court held that there was no constitutional bar to a church receiving a cash grant for renovating its facilities, and that to deny the grant discriminated against religion. And in *American Legion v. American Humanist Association* (2019), it upheld the constitutionality of a government-owned 32-foot tall Latin cross on a public thoroughfare.

These decisions would likely have turned out differently if a majority of the justices believed in the separation of church and state, but it is clear that they don't. Now, the Court has extended its hostility toward separationism by running roughshod over state constitutions. In June 2020, a Court majority ruled in *Espinoza v. Montana Department of Revenue* that a state could not rely on its own constitutional provision prohibiting funding of religious institutions to prohibit a tax credit for religious school tuition.

What was in issue in *Espinoza* – and why the Court's holding has such wide ramifications – was the Montana Constitution's no-funding of religion clause, adopted in 1889, which is similar to provisions found in 37 other state constitutions, often called "no aid" clauses. Even though states first enacted such provisions in the 1830s to protect the financial integrity of state public school

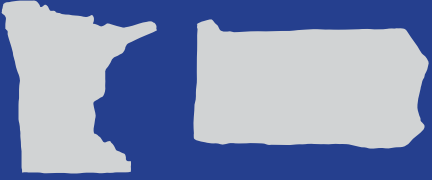
funds, a majority of no-funding provisions were adopted following the near-passage of a similar amendment to the federal constitution in 1876, called the Blaine Amendment. Because that proposal arose at a time of heightened conflict between Protestants and Catholics over Protestant Bible reading in the schools and funding of Catholic schools and charities, the debate over the Blaine Amendment was laced with anti-Catholic rhetoric. So, Chief Justice Roberts wrote in *Espinoza*, because the Blaine Amendment "arose at a time of pervasive hostility to the Catholic Church and to Catholics in general," these "state counterparts have a similarly shameful pedigree" and are unenforceable.

No one knows for certain what motivated a majority of Montana delegates – or those of other states – to adopt the no-funding provisions; likely they had several motivations. But what the Court has done through inference is to make all state no aid clauses dead letter law. Enforcing church-state separation – what Justice Thomas calls "a distorted view of the Establishment Clause" – now amounts to religious discrimination. Thomas Jefferson is rolling over in his grave.

ANALYSIS

Selected Developments in State Law & Policy in 2020


Minnesota & Pennsylvania
Passed laws to prohibit child marriage.




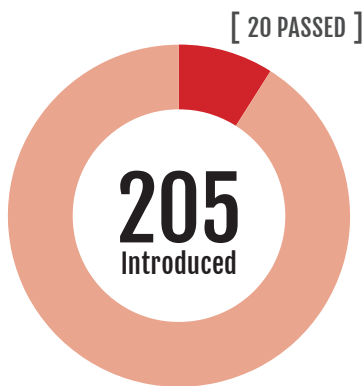
Ohio & West Virginia
Passed laws to broadly protect religious exercise of students in ways that threaten the rights of other students.



Tennessee
Passed laws that allow foster care and adoption agencies that receive taxpayer funds to discriminate based on their religious beliefs and that require public schools to provide released time for religious education.

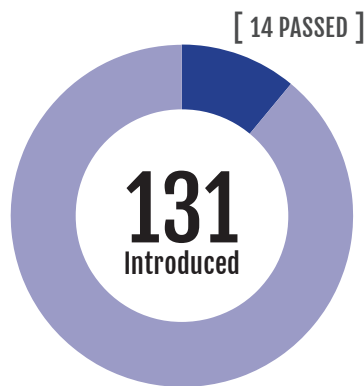


Virginia
Passed laws that prohibit discrimination, including that based on sexual orientation and gender identity, and that protect children from dangerous conversion therapy.

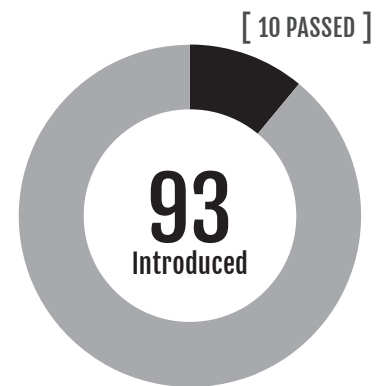
Negative Legislation

We tracked and opposed 205 bills which would have undermined religious equality during the 2020 legislative session. Of these, 20 bills passed and 185 failed.



Positive Legislation

We tracked and supported 131 bills which would have enhanced religious equality during the 2020 legislative session. Of these, 14 bills passed and 117 failed.



Project Blitz

We tracked and opposed 93 Project Blitz-type bills during the 2020 legislative session. Of these, 10 bills passed and 83 failed. Learn more about Project Blitz at www.BlitzWatch.org.

ANALYSIS

Outlook for 2021

As in 2020, the state legislative landscape for 2021 will be shaped by high-profile U.S. Supreme Court cases as well as the continuing global pandemic. States may react to the presence of the new Biden Administration, but it will take some time to see what impact that will have on state legislation.

The death of Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg and the rapid appointment of Justice Amy Coney Barrett, as well as U.S. Supreme Court decisions from the 2020 term and cases being considered in 2021, is likely to have a significant impact on state legislatures in the upcoming year. After the appointment of Justice Brett Kavanaugh, we saw a wave of anti-abortion bills introduced in state legislatures across the country. That trend is only likely to intensify with the appointment of Justice Barrett. Moreover, the 2020 *Espinoza v. Montana Dept. of Revenue* Supreme Court decision will certainly influence legislation affecting the separation of religion and government in 2021. This decision drastically undermines state constitutional protections preventing public funding of religious schools and, in fact, it requires states to fund religious schools if they fund secular ones through a voucher program. A second relevant case, *Fulton v. City of Philadelphia*, to be decided in 2021, will determine whether religious foster care agencies that contract with the government are exempt from nondiscrimination requirements that conflict with their beliefs. Finally, state legislatures will continue to be impacted by the pandemic and by Christian nationalist efforts to impose their beliefs on public schools.

Anti-Abortion Bills

In 2019, there was a dramatic increase in the number of anti-abortion bills introduced and passed, and this flood shows no signs of abating in 2020. Indeed, as challenges to the most egregious of these bills make their way through the courts, we expect to see more states adopting these abortion restrictions. These bills can take many forms, ranging from a total ban on abortion no matter the circumstance, to bills which set an unreasonable time limit for abortions (such as six weeks after conception), to bills which create so many burdens for women and their doctors that abortions are all but impossible to obtain safely and legally. At the same time, states with more liberal political environments may see their legislatures pass measures

to specifically protect access to abortion and to formally repeal anti-abortion laws that have been struck down by the courts and yet remain on the books.

Bills Imposing Religion on Public Schools

Over the past several years, state legislatures have considered an increasing number of bills to require schools to display the national motto "In God We Trust" which are supported by the Christian nationalist Project Blitz campaign. This wave of religious display bills is likely to continue into 2021. Similarly, a surge of bills encouraging bible classes to be taught in public schools began in 2019, and although there were fewer of these measures considered in 2020, we are likely to continue to see bible class bills in 2021. Finally, there were two bills greatly expanding protections for the religious expression of students passed in Ohio and West Virginia in 2020. These bills go far beyond the level of protection required by the First Amendment, and in fact they privilege religious students and threaten the rights of other students. Given the success of these bills, we may see similar measures introduced in 2021. American Atheists is working with national partners to provide resources to advocates and lawmakers to oppose these measures associated with Project Blitz. Follow our work and learn how to get involved at www.BlitzWatch.org.

In 2021, we may also see the continued expansion of state released time laws. In 2020, Tennessee passed the first mandatory released time law, which requires school districts to release students for an hour each day to attend religious instruction. This remarkably broad law even allows school districts to use buses to transport students to this religious education, which creates serious constitutional infirmities. In previous years, several states passed released time laws or expanded such laws to allow students to receive school credit for released time reli-

gious instruction. To the detriment of public education, released time advocates are likely to continue to advance state legislation to build upon these victories.

In higher education, the issue of free speech on college campuses has decreased somewhat in prominence due to the fact that, for the most part, students are attending classes remotely. In 2019, there was a wave of Campus License to Discriminate bills, which allow school-funded religious student organizations to discriminate against other students based on their beliefs. However, in late 2020, the U.S. Department of Education adopted a similar rule that requires public colleges and universities to allow religious student groups to discriminate. It is unclear what effect this will have on state legislatures' willingness to consider these measures.

Denial of Care and Religious Exemption Bills

Although there were no denial of care bills that passed into law in 2020, there were an unusual number of state bills introduced that broadly allowed religious healthcare providers to opt out of providing services that conflict with their beliefs, indicating that there may be concerted efforts to push such measures forward. Despite their unusual breadth (in some cases even allowing for opt-out by insurance companies), these bills saw some momentum. For example, the Kentucky version of the bill passed the relevant Senate committee and saw debate on the Senate floor. We will likely see similar bills introduced in 2021, though it is possible the continuing pandemic will erode their support.

Conversely, the pandemic is likely to increase support for measures designed to limit the authority of state governors to implement public health closure orders that affect places of worship. This is an issue being heavily litigated by places of worship and legal activist organizations that seek to allow expanded exemptions for religious organizations. While these state bills did not pass in 2020, they may be more likely to move forward in 2021 as state legislatures have more time to reflect on the issue, assuming there is continued pressure from religious exemption advocates.

Lastly, in response to the 2020 *Bostock v. Clayton County* decision, which extended LGBTQ nondiscrimination protections under federal employment law, and the *Fulton v. City of Philadelphia* case being considered by the U.S. Supreme Court this term, state legislatures may consider bills that broaden religious exemptions. In the years following the passage of the 2015 *Obergefell v. Hodges* decision, which allowed same-sex marriage across the country, hundreds of religious exemption bills were introduced in dozens of state legislatures, although

few ultimately passed. Given these significant issues being considered by the Court, we are likely to see an increase in religious exemption bills. For example, lawmakers may consider state Religious Freedom Restoration Acts (RFRAs) or bills that specifically protect specific beliefs held by Christian nationalists. Broad religious exemption bills have not had much momentum in recent years, so legislatures are more likely to push forward with more targeted religious exemptions, such as those allowing foster care and adoption agencies to discriminate that passed in Tennessee in 2020.

School Voucher Bills

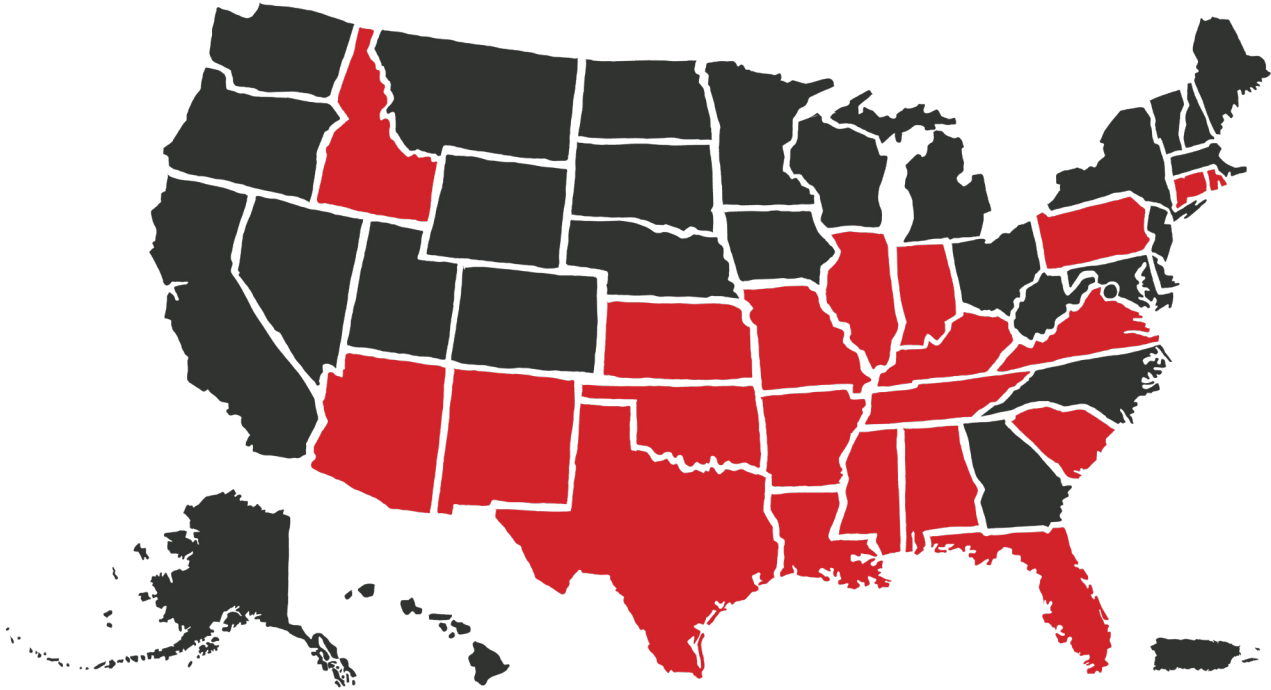
Proponents of school vouchers have long sought to fundamentally transform our education system by using vouchers to undermine public schools and transfer money to private, usually religious, schools. One of the biggest obstacles to these efforts has been the significant number of states with constitutional "no aid" clauses, which prohibit public funding from being used to support sectarian education. Such prohibitions have a long history in our nation, as the Founders believed that it was fundamentally tyrannical to force one person to pay for the religious education of another. However, in the 2020 *Espinoza v. Montana Dept. of Revenue* decision, the U.S. Supreme Court undermined these no aid clauses in state constitutions, preventing them from being used to stop the flow of public funding to private education. Moreover, the Court specifically stated that voucher programs that provide funding to secular schools cannot exclude religious schools. This decision is likely to have a significant impact on state legislatures, particularly in more conservative states, as lawmakers move forward with bills to shift public school funding to private, religious education. Also as a result of this decision, it is possible, albeit unlikely, that more liberal states will roll back any existing school voucher programs.

Youth Protection Bills

The majority of positive bills that passed in 2020 provided protections for young people against the harms caused by religious belief, and that trend is likely to continue. For example, bills were passed in 2020 to prohibit child marriage, to protect youth from dangerous conversion therapy, and to protect girls and young women from female genital mutilation. Each of these measures had bipartisan support even during this very partisan election year. It is likely that we will continue to see such measures advanced in 2021 and that states will continue to make slow but steady progress to protect children from some of these dangerous practices propagated due to harmful and irrational beliefs.

NATIONAL ISSUE SUMMARY

Religious Freedom Restoration Acts



Based on U.S. Supreme Court precedent, the U.S. Constitution's Free Exercise Clause does not limit the ability of the federal government to pass neutral laws that apply to everyone regardless of their religion, even if they incidentally burden religious expression. The Court has noted that to do otherwise would allow individual religious belief to supersede the laws of the land, resulting in an unworkable society where laws could not be applied evenly.

Despite this warning, Congress passed the federal Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA) in 1993, and 21 states have since passed their own version of this law. RFRA requires the government to meet a more restrictive legal test when they take any action that burdens religious expression—they must demonstrate that the government interest is compelling and that they used the least restrictive means to achieve that interest.

Over time, as predicted by the Supreme Court and by advocates such as American Atheists who opposed passage of RFRA, these laws have been misused at both the state and federal levels to carve out exemptions that privilege religious expression. Christian nationalists seek to apply these laws in new ways, such as undermining civil rights laws that protect LGBTQ people and women from discrimination.

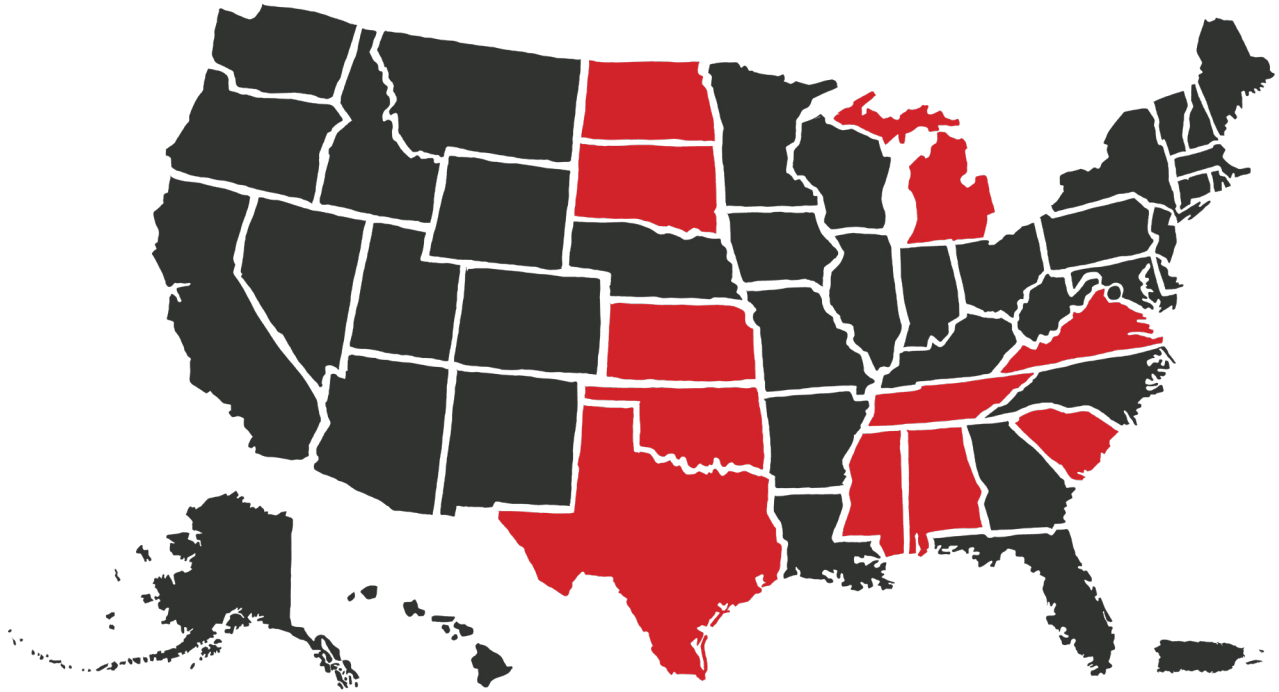
● States with statutory Religious Freedom Restoration Acts (RFRAs)

[21 STATES]

Alabama	Mississippi
Arizona	Missouri
Arkansas	New Mexico
Connecticut	Oklahoma
Florida	Pennsylvania
Idaho	Rhode Island
Illinois	South Carolina
Indiana	Tennessee
Kansas	Texas
Kentucky	Virginia
Louisiana	

NATIONAL ISSUE SUMMARY

Religious Exemptions in Foster Care and Adoption



There are several significant areas of the law in which religious organizations are provided with special privileges to avoid otherwise applicable legal requirements based on their religious beliefs. One class of religious exemptions that are particularly notable for their fundamental unfairness and cruelty are those that allow discrimination by religious child welfare agencies.

These laws are unfair because they allow foster care and adoption agencies that receive taxpayer funding to discriminate against potential parents, and in some states, foster or adoptive youths themselves. This means that taxpayers who are LGBTQ, atheists, religious minorities, or that fall in some other category these agencies religiously disapprove of must fund discrimination against the most vulnerable members of their communities.

These laws are cruel because they reduce the number of qualified families, which in turn denies these at-risk children the opportunity to find loving, permanent homes. Despite the harms caused by these exemptions, they are popular with wealthy religious special interests who seek government funding to augment their charitable work, and so the number of states with these laws has slowly increased over the past several years.

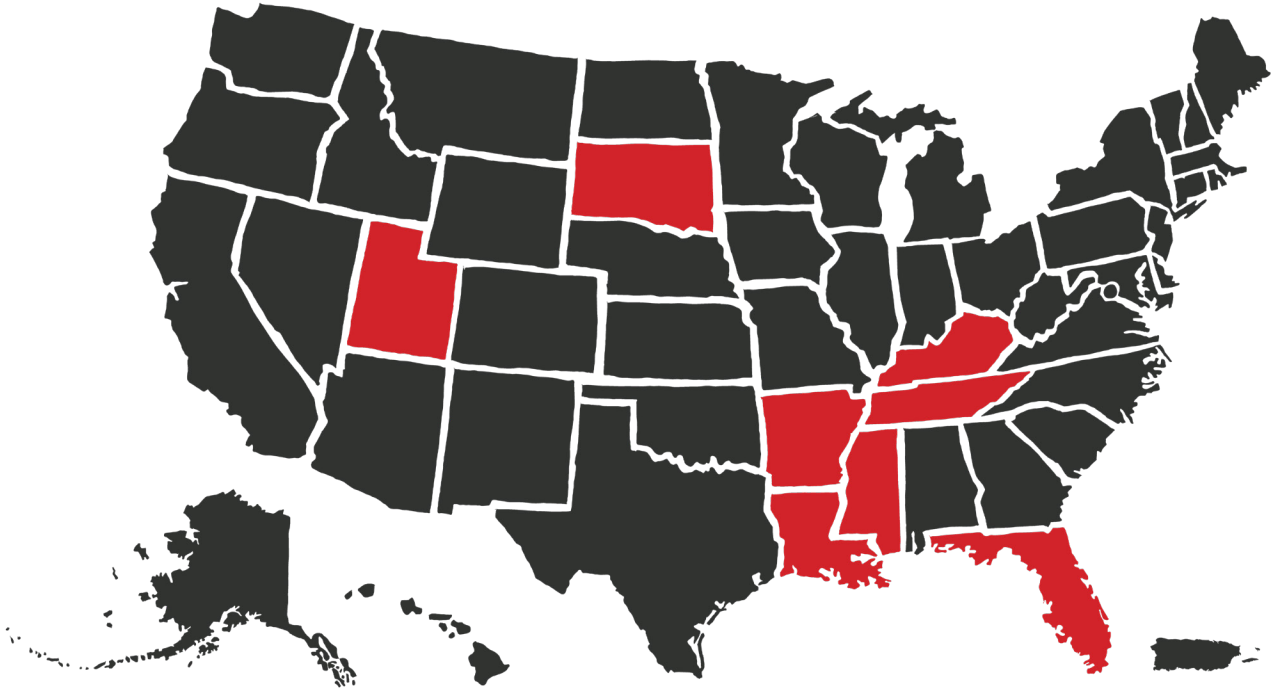
● States that allow child welfare agencies to discriminate based on religious belief

[11 STATES]

Alabama	South Carolina
Kansas	South Dakota
Michigan	Tennessee
Mississippi	Texas
North Dakota	Virginia
Oklahoma	

NATIONAL ISSUE SUMMARY

Mandatory National Motto Displays



An increasing number of states require public schools (and sometimes other public buildings) to display the national motto “In God We Trust.” These bills vary somewhat. While some states require that the national motto displays be donated, others require them to be bought with taxpayer funds. Similarly, some states specify the size, material, and location of these displays. For example, some states require every classroom and library to have their own display, while others require display in a “prominent place.”

Mandatory national motto display bills are associated with Project Blitz, a state legislative campaign intended to promote Christian nationalism. These displays serve no educational purpose--they are purely symbolic and intended to promote the ideas that god and religion belongs in public school and that America is a Christian nation. Unfortunately, these displays can stigmatize students with differing beliefs, including atheist and religious minority students, resulting in discrimination and bullying.

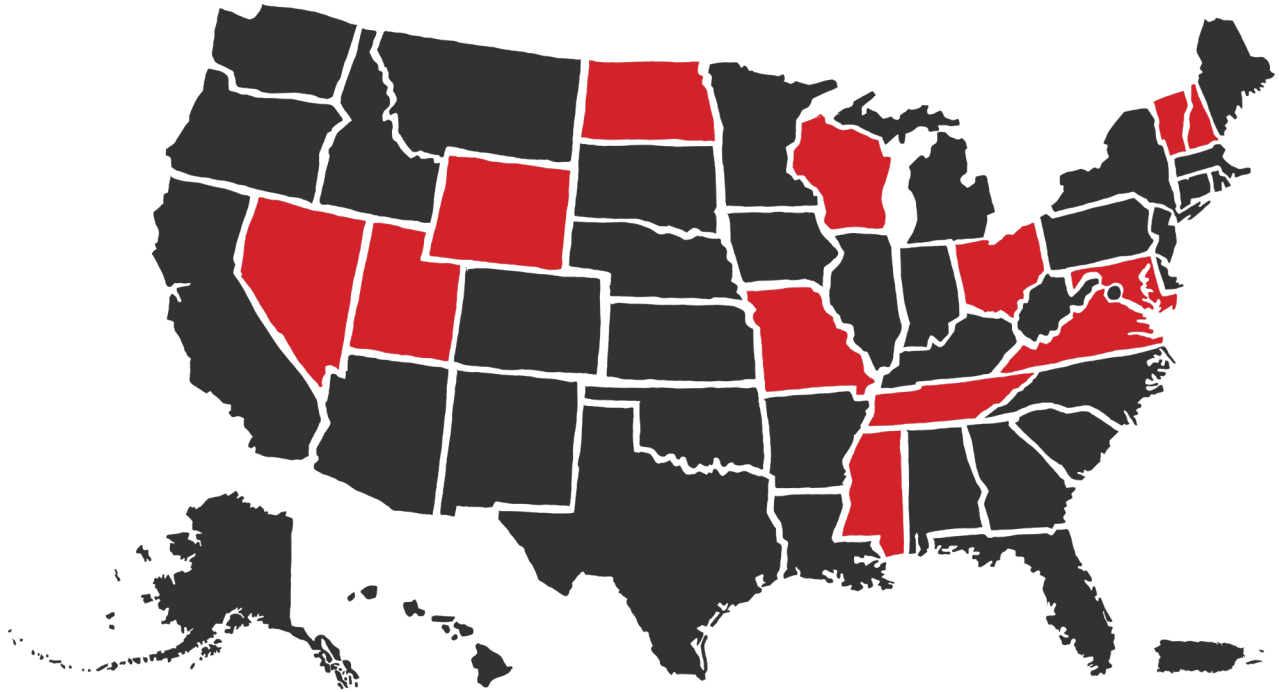
● **States that require public schools to display the national motto**

[8 STATES]

Arkansas	Mississippi
Florida	South Dakota
Kentucky	Tennessee
Louisiana	Utah

NATIONAL ISSUE SUMMARY

Exemptions in Homeschooling Laws



An increasing number of U.S. families are choosing to homeschool their children. Unfortunately, however, the state of the law regarding homeschooling has lagged behind the needs of these families, and as a result, too many homeschooled children do not receive the education they need to thrive as adults. This map focuses on exemptions from the already very limited patchwork of state homeschooling laws. The reality is that most states place very few, if any, requirements on instructor qualifications, testing and evaluation, or even basic protections to prevent child abuse for children being homeschooled. Especially since homeschooling frequently has a religious component, a religious exemption can thoroughly undermine the few state law protections that exist.

While most of the noted exemptions are based in religious belief, some states such as Utah instead broadly prohibit school districts from conducting any sort of oversight of homeschooled children. Unfortunately, these exemptions put children at risk because of the religious beliefs of their parents. Not only do they compromise the education and future of children that are homeschooled, but they prevent the oversight and intervention essential to protect vulnerable children.

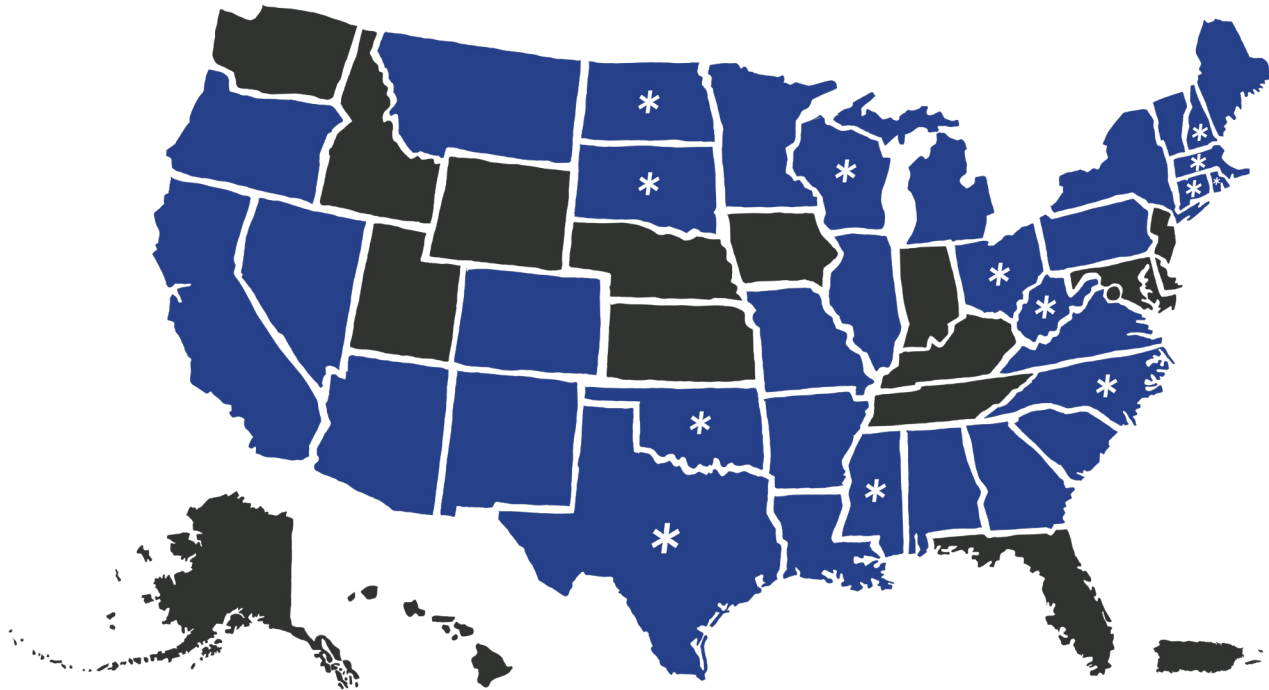
● States with exemptions to minimal homeschooling requirements

[13 STATES]

Maryland	Tennessee
Mississippi	Utah
Missouri	Virginia
Nevada	Vermont
New Hampshire	Wisconsin
North Dakota	Wyoming
Ohio	

NATIONAL ISSUE SUMMARY

Limitations on Clergy Privilege



Clergy-penitent privilege is a right recognized in all 50 states that provides confidentiality for discussions between religious leaders and their followers. This privilege is most frequently referenced in the Catholic practice of confession, but it pertains to other religions as well. The privilege is very broad and generally prohibits any court from compelling testimony from a clergy member. Unfortunately, because the privilege is so broad, it can sometimes prevent the reporting of child abuse and lead to other negative outcomes. In this map, we look at those states that limit clergy privilege so that it is less likely to conflict with other critical public policy goals, such as preventing child abuse.

A significant number of states seek to protect youth by making clergy mandatory reporters for suspected child abuse and neglect, like educators and healthcare providers. This means that if there is a reasonable cause for a clergy member to believe a child is being abused, they are required to report this suspicion to state authorities. A smaller number of states provide explicit exceptions to the clergy privilege for child abuse. This is important because, even with mandatory reporting, if communication is still privileged, it is more difficult to investigate the situation or enforce the required reporting.

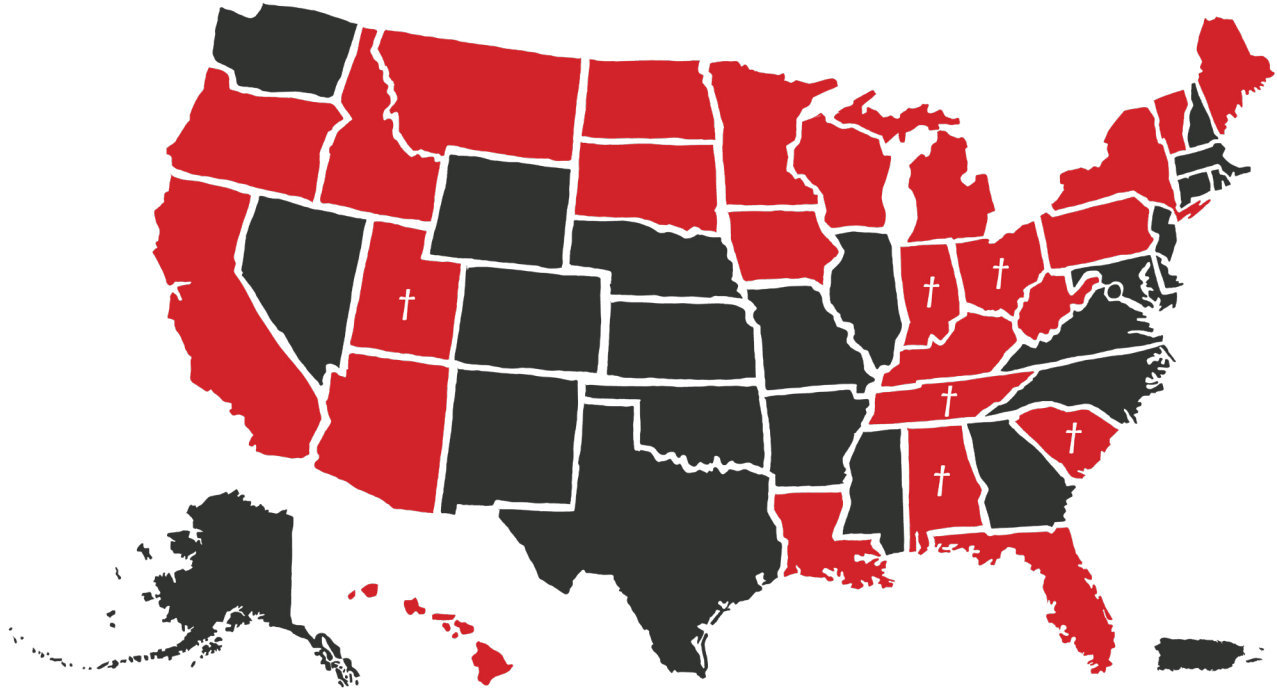
Note: The * symbol indicates a state that excepts child abuse from the clergy privilege.

States that require clergy to report suspected child abuse
 [34 STATES]

Alabama	Minnesota	Oklahoma*
Arkansas	Missouri	Pennsylvania
Arizona	Mississippi*	Rhode Island
California	Montana	South Carolina
Colorado	Nevada	South Dakota*
Connecticut*	New Hampshire*	Texas*
Georgia	New Mexico	Virginia
Illinois	New York	Vermont
Louisiana	North Carolina*	Wisconsin
Maine	North Dakota*	West Virginia*
Massachusetts*	Ohio*	
Michigan	Oregon	

NATIONAL ISSUE SUMMARY

Public School Released Time Laws



A significant number of states have laws that allow school districts to provide “released time” for students to leave school in order to attend private religious education during the school day. In order to meet constitutional requirements, this religious instruction must take place outside school grounds, the school may not encourage participation, and school resources may not be spent to provide transportation or to facilitate this religious education. Unfortunately, these laws can compromise the education of both participating and nonparticipating students if they detract from class time. This is especially true in states like Tennessee, which mandates that every public school permit up to 1 hour per day for released time. This not only significantly shortens the amount of education time available for students, it causes needless disruption for educators and administrators.

In addition, several states have laws that allow public school districts to offer educational credit for religious education classes taught off of school grounds. Although these provisions are sometimes connected to released time, there is generally no requirement that this religious education take place during released time. While a few courts have upheld these laws, their constitutionality is highly questionable. They provide a special advantage to religious students by providing them with additional options to receive school credit, they are very difficult to administer in a religiously neutral way, and they may be religiously coercive.

Note: The † symbol indicates a state which allows school districts to give academic credit to students who attend religious instruction courses.

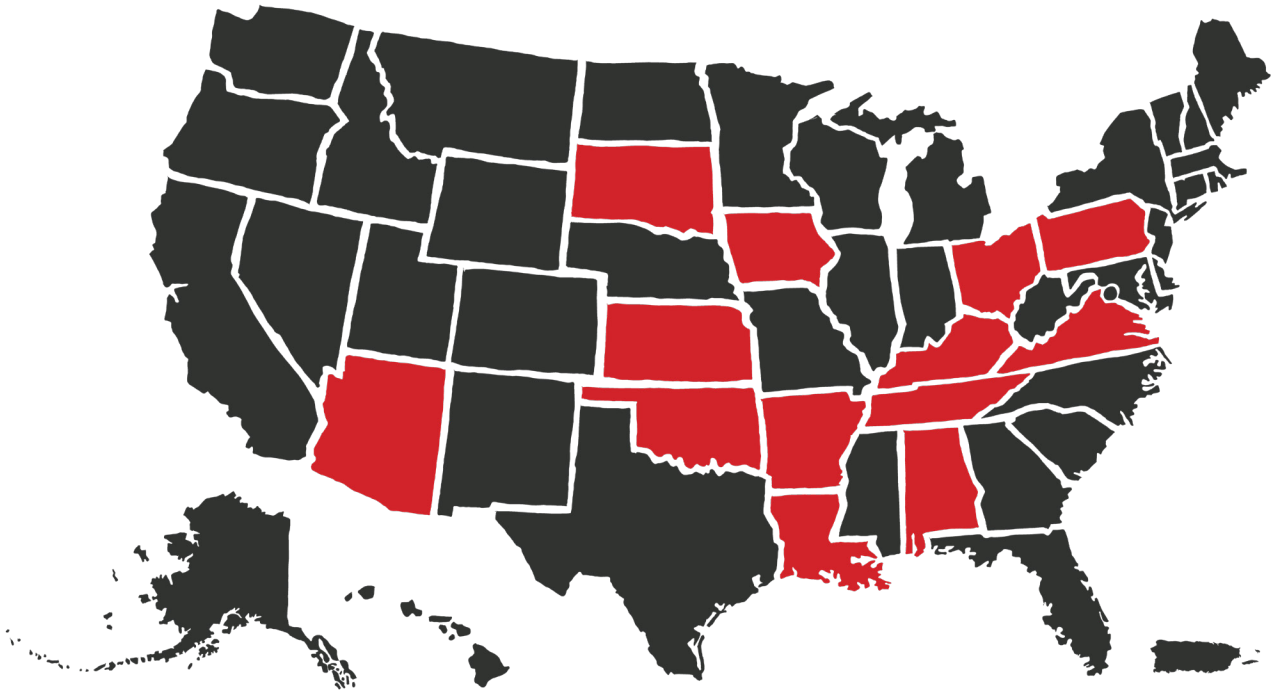
● **Public school released time laws**

[26 STATES]

- | | |
|------------|------------------|
| Alabama † | Montana |
| Arizona | New York |
| California | North Dakota |
| Florida | Ohio † |
| Hawaii | Oregon |
| Idaho | Pennsylvania |
| Indiana † | South Carolina † |
| Iowa | South Dakota |
| Kentucky | Tennessee † |
| Louisiana | Utah † |
| Maine | Vermont |
| Michigan | West Virginia |
| Minnesota | Wisconsin |

NATIONAL ISSUE SUMMARY

Campus License to Discriminate Laws



The majority of public colleges and universities have nondiscrimination policies that allow students to participate in any recognized student organization, and most colleges and universities collect a fee from students that is provided to these organizations in order to support their programming. The U.S. Supreme Court has made clear that public colleges and universities must treat student organizations equally with respect to recognition and funding—they cannot discriminate based on viewpoint—but they may impose universal requirements such as nondiscrimination policies. These policies are important because they ensure that students are not forced to pay for student organizations in which they are not allowed to participate.

Nevertheless, an increasing number of states are passing laws which prevent public colleges and universities from protecting students from discrimination by student organizations. These provisions, often called “Campus License to Discriminate” laws, create exemptions that allow religious student organizations to enforce discriminatory codes of conduct or discriminate directly against disfavored groups of students, without losing recognition and funding from the school.

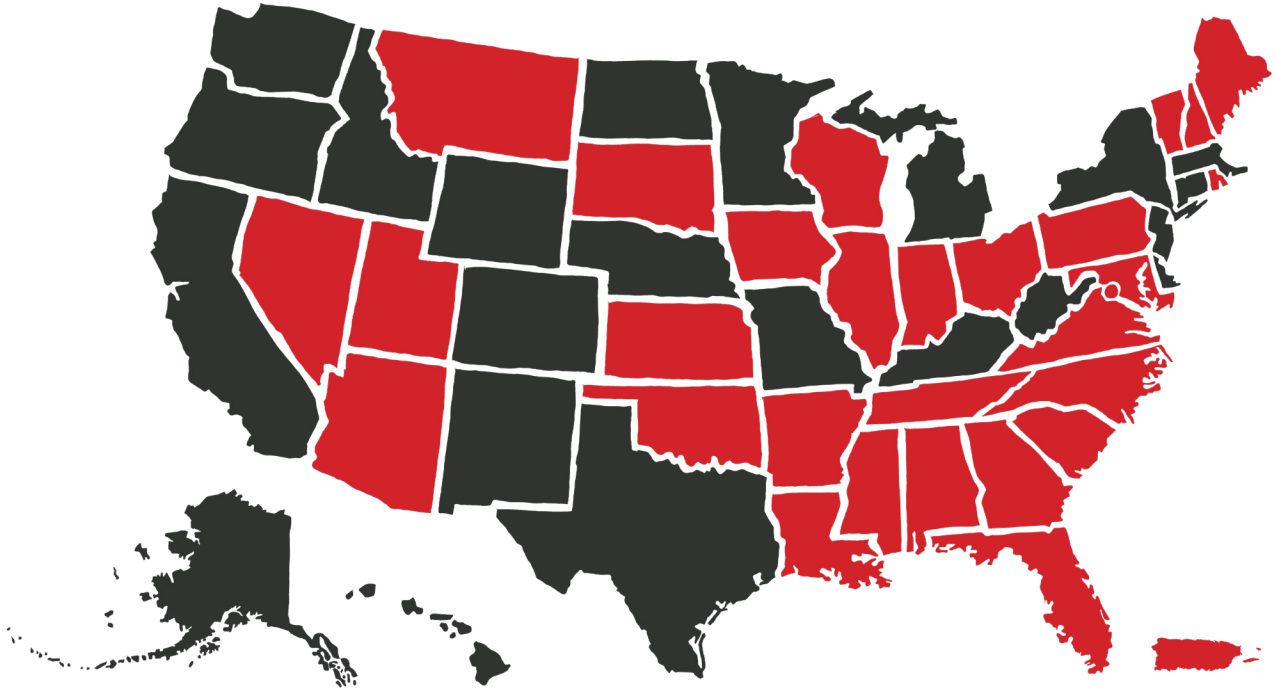
These laws are generally sought by religious student groups so that they can exclude LGBTQ people, women, atheists, and religious minorities from their membership and activities. In late 2020, the Trump Administration issued regulations that require all public colleges and universities to allow religious student groups to discriminate. At this point, it is unclear what effect this regulation will have on these state laws.

● **States with laws that prevent public colleges from enforcing student non-discrimination policies**
[13 STATES]

Alabama	Ohio
Arkansas	Oklahoma
Arizona	Pennsylvania
Iowa	South Dakota
Kentucky	Tennessee
Kansas	Virginia
Louisiana	

NATIONAL ISSUE SUMMARY

School Voucher Laws



For decades, proponents of private and religious education have sought to divert public school funding to private education. The most successful of these efforts have been school voucher programs, which provide students with a sum of money in order to attend a private school. Some states instead create tax-credit scholarship programs, which achieve the same result by relying on third-party organizations to manage the vouchers.

While supporters of private schools would say that they result in better academic outcomes, there is little evidence to support this conclusion. Instead, these programs drain critical funds from public education, reinforce structural inequalities, and undermine religious freedom. Research shows that approximately 78% of private school students attend religious schools. However, because most voucher programs are not sufficient to cover the cost of secular private schools, students accepting vouchers are disproportionately likely to attend religious schools. Although this is clearly taxpayer funding being used for an inherently religious purpose, the U.S. Supreme Court has justified voucher programs because the parents receiving the vouchers make an independent choice about where to send the money.

Voucher proponents have long seen state constitutional “no aid” clauses, which prevent the state from using public funds for religious education, as barriers to voucher programs. However, after the Supreme Court’s 2020 *Espinoza v. Montana Dept. of Revenue* decision, these constitutional protections may not be used to prevent funding of religious schools. Therefore, we are likely to see renewed efforts by voucher advocates to create new programs and weaken public schools by shifting increasingly large amounts of taxpayer funding to private, religious schools.

● School Voucher Laws [30 STATES]

Alabama	North Carolina
Arizona	Ohio
Arkansas	Oklahoma
Florida	Pennsylvania
Georgia	Puerto Rico
Illinois	Rhode Island
Indiana	South Carolina
Iowa	South Dakota
Kansas	Tennessee
Louisiana	Utah
Maryland	Vermont
Maine	Virginia
Mississippi	Washington, DC
Montana	Wisconsin
New Hampshire	
Nevada	

ISSUES

Analysis and Categorization

This report identifies four categories of public policy in each state that affect religious equality and the separation of religion and government: Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections, Education & Youth, Healthcare & Wellness, and Special Privileges for Religion. Within each category, laws and policies that positively and negatively impact religious equality are listed along with a brief explanation of the topic.

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious liberty created by the U.S. Constitution. These protections form the bedrock of our constitutional order by ensuring both that everyone is entitled to their beliefs and that no one's beliefs are favored by the government. They are meant to ensure that the government treats everyone equally, regardless of their religion or if they reject religion altogether. Similarly, most states have passed nondiscrimination laws that prohibit discrimination based on protected characteristics, including religious beliefs or lack thereof.

POSITIVE LAWS & POLICIES

Establishment Clause and Free Exercise Clause

This item indicates that the state constitution has a provision analogous to the First Amendment's Establishment Clause or Free Exercise Clause: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof."

Many state constitutions reiterate these important protections enshrined in the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. These clauses may be interpreted in accordance with federal precedent or state courts may interpret them to provide a greater level of protection for the separation of religion and government than under federal law.

No Aid Provisions in State Constitutions

As a result of the decision in *Espinoza v. Montana Department of Revenue*, it is unclear that no aid clauses in state constitutions can be used to protect the separation of religion and government by preventing states from using taxpayer funding for religious education.

For that reason, the State of the Secular States report will no longer track these provisions.

Strong Taxpayer Standing

This item indicates those states that historically recognize standing for taxpayers to bring suit against unconstitutional expenditures of state funds. Standing is a legal term that indicates whether someone is qualified to pursue a claim in court. When a state or local government exceeds the bounds of its constitution or the U.S. Constitution (by spending public money to endorse a religion, for example), generally the only way to prevent that expenditure is for individuals to bring suit in court.

At the federal level, there has been a gradual erosion of taxpayer standing doctrines, which may prevent individuals from suing the government in federal court. States, however, are not bound by this federal-level precedent, and while some states have incorporated elements of federal standing doctrine into their jurisprudence, others use different approaches to ensure access to the courts. Strong taxpayer standing doctrines allow citizens to challenge unconstitutional uses of taxpayer funds, including violations of the separation of religion and government

Nondiscrimination Laws

This item indicates whether the state has nondiscrimination laws that prohibit discrimination on the basis of religion in various areas of the law, such as employment, housing, public accommodations, and education. The majority of states provide protection in at least some of these areas, and they typically cover a number of other protected characteristics such as race, color, sex, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, and disability. It is important to note that while these nondiscrimination laws typically list “religion” or “creed” as protected characteristics, this category covers discrimination against atheists and nonreligious people as well as people with various religious beliefs. Discrimination prohibited by these types of laws can take many forms, including failure to hire a person, failure to promote a person, taking adverse actions in the workplace against a person, failure to address harassment, refusal to admit or serve a person, or firing a person because of a protected characteristic.

Many nondiscrimination laws exempt religious organizations, either by excluding them from the definitions of covered organizations or by including a specific exemption. The U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that in some instances, religious organizations are entitled to be exempt from employment nondiscrimination laws. This is called the “ministerial exemption” because it has generally applied to clergy and faith leaders. Similarly, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which federally prohibits employment discrimination, has an exemption for religious organizations: “This subchapter shall not apply... to a religious corporation, association, educational institution, or society with respect to the employment of individuals of a particular religion to perform work connected with the carrying on by such corporation, association, educational institution, or society of its activities.” However, some states have nondiscrimination laws that provide an even broader allowance for religious organizations to discriminate. If a state’s nondiscrimination law has broader exemptions than those in Title VII, this item will indicate that the state has religious exemptions.

NEGATIVE LAWS & POLICIES

Religious Tests for Office

While the U.S. Constitution states that “no religious Test shall ever be required as a Qualification to any Office or public Trust under the United States,” this provision has not always been understood to apply to state offices. Consequently, several state constitutions require office-holders to swear a religious oath or require candidates to practice a specific religion. Others explicitly prohibit atheists or nonreligious people from holding office. It is generally understood that these provisions are unconstitutional and without effect, but they may remain in state law or the state constitution despite being voided by a court. This item indicates that these inactive provisions remain in the state constitution or state law.

Education & Youth

Unfortunately, but unsurprisingly, the bulk of negative legislation sought by Christian nationalists, such as those behind Project Blitz, targets schools and youth. Young people, particularly those who aren’t already being influenced by a church, can be an easy target for indoctrination. Research shows that individuals raised within a particular religious faith are likely to remain in that faith as they age. Younger children are particularly vulnerable to peer pressure, as they are still in the process of identity development and have yet to fully develop their capacity for reason.

In recent years there has been significant advocacy by Christian nationalists to pass legislation to convince young people that America was founded as a Christian nation, in order to propagate a false version of history. This effort seeks to enshrine revisionist history into the law, conflate founding documents with religious ones, teach the bible in a devotional manner in schools, and require the display of religious messages and symbolism in schools.

Moreover, because young people depend on the care of others, they are especially vulnerable to harms caused by the religious beliefs of their parents and caretakers. Sadly, religious beliefs are all too often used to justify conduct which can have a severely negative and lifelong impact on young people, including denial of medical care or dangerous practices like conversion therapy.

POSITIVE LAWS & POLICIES

Protection from Child Marriage

This item indicates laws that prohibit individuals below the age of majority (usually 18) from marrying. Because exceptions, such as those allowing parental consent, can be misused to force children to marry, we are only counting those laws which flatly prohibit the marriage of minors.

This issue is critically important because too frequently these marriages occur in religious sects where very young girls are forced to marry much older men. Child brides forced into marriage have few options. As minors, they face legal dead ends if they want to end their marriage. In states where their parents (or spouse) have custody rights, organizations and shelters are unable to interfere with those rights. As a result, these children have no legal avenues to escape an abusive family or husband. They are too often removed from school, raped, and forced to live in poverty. The only way to give child brides the legal right to say “no” to marriage is to prohibit marriage among minors altogether.

Protection from Conversion Therapy

This item indicates laws designed to protect LGBTQ youth from dangerous and discredited conversion therapy. Conversion therapy consists of a variety of harmful practices which falsely claim to change a person's sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. These laws generally apply through licensing restrictions that prevent licensed medical and mental health providers from conducting conversion therapy on youth under the age of 18. Because they are not generally licensed providers, these laws are unable to regulate conversion therapy that is provided by religious clergy.

Protection from Female Genital Mutilation

This item indicates laws designed to protect young girls and women from female genital mutilation (FGM), which is the ritual cutting or alteration of female genitalia for nonmedical purposes. This dangerous practice is predominantly forced upon young girls, often for religious or cultural reasons, and performed by non-licensed practitioners. Fortunately, a majority of states prohibit FGM and make subjecting minors to this practice a felony. Comprehensive state laws also provide public education about FGM, create programs to raise awareness about this dangerous practice, and offer resources to girls and young women who are at risk for FGM.

Sex Education

This item examines how state laws and policies affect the quality of sex education in that state's public schools, which can and should play an important role in providing comprehensive and medically accurate sex education. Comprehensive sex education helps to foster healthy relationships and development, reduces the risk of unintended pregnancy, and lowers the risk of sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

Under this analysis, a state is considered to offer comprehensive sex education if it is required by law and if the curriculum covers a wide range of relevant issues beyond abstinence. A comprehensive curriculum generally teaches abstinence as the best method for avoiding STIs and unintended pregnancies while also teaching that contraception reduces the risk of unintended pregnancy and infection from STIs, including HIV. These programs also develop interpersonal and other communication skills and help young people explore their own values, goals, and options.

A state's public school sex education curriculum is considered "abstinence only" if there are laws mandating that programs must exclusively or primarily promote abstinence from sexual activity outside of marriage. By doing so, these programs tell students that abstinence is an unmarried person's only moral

option. This category also includes "abstinence-plus" programs, which provide some information about contraception in the context of strong abstinence messages.

Some states have laws that prohibit educators from discussing LGBTQ topics in school or mandate that such topics be presented negatively. While these laws usually apply only to sex education, they are frequently applied more broadly by school districts. Many of these laws are not enforced, but they may still stigmatize LGBTQ students and have a negative impact on the school environment.

Homeschooling Laws

This item provides an assessment of state laws that regulate homeschooling. Although homeschooling is not always a religious issue, it cannot be denied that religious groups have long dominated this issue area. Such organizations have worked to stymie any efforts to impose reasonable requirements for homeschooling or to ensure the safety and well-being of homeschooled students.

For this assessment, we examined the state law to determine if there are a few minimal educational and safety requirements. First, we determined whether state law requires homeschooling instructors (whether parents or outside instructors) to meet any qualification requirements. This is critical to ensure that those teaching homeschooled students (usually, but not always, parents) are capable of providing quality instruction.

Second, we examined whether state law requires evaluation of homeschooled students' academic progress at least annually. Some states use standardized testing to measure progress while other states use progress reports detailing what a child learned during a certain period of time. As part of this evaluation, we looked for some type of remediation process so that efforts can be made to help homeschooled children when they fall behind.

Third, we examined whether state law protects children by disallowing homeschooling where an adult in the household has been convicted of certain crimes, such as homicide, aggravated assault, rape, or child abuse. Unfortunately, research has clearly shown that homeschooled children are at greater risk for abuse and neglect. Without basic protections in place, homeschooling can allow child abuse to go undetected because there can be a lack of contact with adults outside the home.

Finally, we looked at religious or other exemptions to homeschooling requirements. For example, some states exempt parents from homeschooling laws and oversight if the parents claim a religious objection to such requirements. This item also

PARTNER PERSPECTIVE

State Legislative Change to Improve Sex Education

JENNIFER DRIVER

Former Vice President of Policy & Strategic Partnerships, SIECUS: Sex Ed for Social Change

The sex education that young people receive nationwide is shaped by policy decisions at every level, ranging from local school boards to the federal government. State legislation, in particular, plays a critical role by determining how comprehensive instruction may be statewide.

While abstinence-only-until-marriage (AOUM) proponents might portray sex education as a controversial issue, all evidence suggests that comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) is a mainstream value in the United States. A vast majority of people in the U.S. support CSE—medically accurate, age-appropriate education that includes information about both abstinence and contraception, among many other topics. **A survey released in 2018, reported 98 percent of likely voters support sex education in high school, and 89 percent of likely voters support sex education in middle school**—in stark contrast to the Trump-Pence administration’s push for abstinence-only programs. Additionally, nearly seven in ten likely voters support the federal government funding teen pregnancy prevention programs that both encourage teens to wait to have sex and provide them with information about birth control and sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

Public support for sex education in this country is overwhelming—regardless of political affiliation, religion, and/or regional demographics. Yet less than **43% of US high schools and 18% of middle schools** taught all 20 topics identified by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as critical sexual health topics.

While it is largely the responsibility of each state to meet this standard, federal funding directly influences the quality of sex education, too. **More than \$2 billion has been wasted on failed federal AOUM programming since 1981.** AOUM funding has **more than doubled** under the Trump administration. This trend directly impacts state-level sex ed policy, as it may inspire state legislatures to support AOUM programming in order to take advantage of federal funding opportunities, despite the well-documented harms to young people resulting

from such programming. Proponents have gone so far as to rebranded abstinence-only programs by appropriating public health language and calling them “sexual risk avoidance” programs. Funding for these programs include the Title V (state SRA funding) \$75 million under the new SRA label and competitive SRA funding, which skyrocketed from \$15 million in FY 2017 to \$35 million in FY 2019.

Unfortunately, only **29 states and the District of Columbia** currently mandate sex education in public schools. Without mandates, sex ed disparities increase—particularly among youth of color and LGBTQ young people. **Fifteen** states do not require sex education or HIV/STI instruction to be any of the following: age-appropriate, medically accurate, culturally responsive, or evidence-based/evidence-informed. Additionally, only **9** states require sex education or HIV/STI instruction to include information on consent.

CSE supporters should push state and local leaders to provide youth with the sex education they deserve, including an emphasis on important topics such as healthy relationships, affirmative consent, electronic communication, and LGBTQ inclusion. It is critical, however, to be mindful of the multiple levels of policy decision-making that impact the implementation of state legislation. Without a coordinated plan for implementation; credible guidelines, standards, or curricula; appropriate resources; supportive environments; teacher training; and accountability, young people still may not have access to the information and skills they need to ensure their health and well-being. And that’s why the work of coalitions with sex educators, school administrators, parents, and, most importantly, young people is paramount.

Change—particularly for the better—can take time. Sex education across the country continues to make incremental steps. It will take strong policies and vocal champions to ensure young people have access to complete sex education they deserve.

PARTNER PERSPECTIVE

Homeschooling Law Needs Reforms

ANDREW TORREZ

Co-Host of Opening Arguments Podcast, American Atheists Board Member

I have been homeschooling my son for six years. Prior to COVID-19, that announcement would often provoke quizzical looks from my fellow atheists; after all, the overwhelming majority of homeschoolers in the United States are conservative evangelical Christians whose stated reasons for removing their children from public schools tend to be things like a belief that “secular liberals were indoctrinating their kids.” The most comprehensive survey data maintained by the Department of Education shows that more than nine out of every ten homeschooling parents do so out of a stated concern for the “environment” at public schools, and specifically, to raise their children with a “religious and/or moral alternative” to that environment. (Just 16% homeschool because their child has special needs, like mine.)

As a result, the homeschooling community has been largely insular and self-reinforcing for decades. That means that many of the most popular resources and curricula are not just explicitly religious but teach dangerous pseudoscience, rewrite history from a Christian nationalist perspective that does “not even try to present an accurate version of the past,” and even promote “Bible-based math” (whatever that is). Since fundamentalist Christians are the overwhelming majority of consumers, even secular homeschooling resources typically water down “controversial” subjects like evolution to market themselves to this religious supermajority.

Thanks to the coronavirus, all of that is about to change. The recent third-wave spike in COVID-19 cases means that many public schools are scaling back or scrapping their plans to reopen entirely, despite ongoing struggles to integrate remote learning options. Sixty percent of parents are now strongly considering some form of at-home learning, leading experts to predict that we’re in the middle of a five-fold increase in homeschooling. That gives us a unique opportunity to make our voices heard and change both the legal environment and the public perception of the homeschool market.

Interestingly, the Supreme Court has never directly ruled that parents have a right to homeschool their children. Instead, that right is inferred from century-old cases such as *Pierce v. Society of Sisters*, 268 U.S. 510 (1925), which struck down an Oregon law prohibiting private schools. As a result, most legal scholars agree that states have wide latitude to regulate homeschooling

to promote important public values, including ensuring that children receive an adequate education.

Currently, 26 states impose little to no oversight on homeschooling; those states run the gamut from rural, deep-red states like Idaho and Alaska to deep-blue states such as New Jersey and Illinois. Several purport to regulate homeschooling but have little oversight in practice. In Missouri, for example, Mo. Rev. Stat. § 167.031 purports to require homeschoolers to teach 1,000 hours per school year with at least 60% in mandatory academic subjects such as reading, language, math, social studies, and science. The same Missouri law, however, provides that the state cannot monitor homeschool parents, that the state cannot impose any substantive requirements on the curricula used, and that any parent that submits a note stating compliance with the law cannot be held accountable under the statute.

Moreover, even in the minority of states that have any mechanisms for oversight, the trend has been towards laxity. Consider Virginia, which the Home School Legal Defense Association considers a “moderate” regulation jurisdiction. Under the operative law (Va. Code. § 22.1-254.1), parents are required to “notify” their local school superintendent that they are homeschooling their children. However, as the Virginia Supreme Court just held in *Sosebee v. Franklin County School Bd.*, 843 S.E.2d 367 (Va. 2020) – superintendents have no power to approve or reject such notices, only to receive them, and the school board itself has no power whatsoever to adopt any regulation that pertains to “home instruction.” One legal scholar summarized the landscape this way: “Homeschooling now exists in a virtual legal void; parents have near-total authority over what their children learn and how they are disciplined.”

I do not want to pass lightly on the ultimate consequences of this lack of oversight. It creates a space in which abusive parents can evade mandatory reporters of physical and sexual abuse, and has emboldened bigoted parents to try and impose “Christian homeschooling” on their LGBTQ kids. As nonreligious parents begin to enter this overwhelmingly religious space, we can stand up for the best interests of our kids, instead of solely focusing on religious parents’ right to control their child’s education. At the end of the day, it’s up to us to reverse this trend and create an educational environment that works for secular society.

assesses broader exemptions from oversight of homeschooling, such as state laws that explicitly prohibit any oversight of homeschooling by school districts.

NEGATIVE LAWS & POLICIES

Anti-Science / Anti-Evolution Laws

This item indicates laws that allow public school educators to present non-scientific religious doctrine as scientific fact, most often relating to evolution. For example, these laws may require public schools to teach about “controversies” in areas where religious doctrine conflicts with generally accepted science.

Bible Class Laws

This item indicates laws that require or encourage public schools to offer elective classes on the Christian bible as a historical or literary document. While it may be technically possible for a public school to offer a course on the bible that uses it solely for historical or literary purposes, studies have shown it is very challenging for schools to consistently teach the bible in a nondevotional manner. Instead, many schools that offer such courses purposefully use them to proselytize and engage students in religious activities.

Mandatory National Motto Displays

This item indicates laws that require schools (and sometimes other public buildings) to display the national motto, “In God We Trust.” Some of these laws mandate the size, format, and location (for example, “every classroom” or “a prominent location”) of these displays, while others leave these details to the individual school or district. Some of these laws require that the displays be donated rather than paid for with taxpayer funds.

Campus License to Discriminate Laws

This item indicates state laws that prevent public colleges and universities from applying nondiscrimination policies to religious student organizations. The majority of public colleges and universities have nondiscrimination policies that allow students to participate in any recognized student organization, and most colleges and universities collect a fee from students that is provided to student organizations in order to support their programming.

The U.S. Supreme Court has made clear that public colleges and universities must treat student organizations equally with respect to recognition and funding—they cannot discriminate based on viewpoint—but they may impose universal requirements such as nondiscrimination policies. These policies are important because they ensure that students are not forced to pay for student organizations in which they are not allowed to participate.

However, some states have Campus License to Discriminate laws that require public colleges and universities to both recognize religious student organizations and to allow them to discriminate by excluding some students based on the organization’s religious beliefs. Religious groups may advocate for these laws so that they can exclude students of other religions or other groups they disfavor, such as LGBTQ people.

There have been some legal developments in this area because the Trump Administration released regulations requiring all public colleges and universities to both recognize religious groups and also allow them to discriminate. It is unclear what effect this will have on these state laws.

School Vouchers & Tax Credits

This item indicates whether state law establishes school voucher or tax credit programs. School vouchers divert taxpayer funding from public education to private educational institutions, the majority of which are religious. Many states have laws that either allow school vouchers statewide or create pilot voucher programs. Tax credit programs create a more complex process to achieve the same result. States with these programs give tax credits to individuals who donate to third party scholarship organizations. These organizations then give students vouchers to attend private, usually religious, schools. So, in effect, these programs are subsidized by the state.

School Prayer Laws

This item indicates state laws that allow schools to improperly promote religious activities. For example, this includes state laws that allow school staff to participate in religious activities on school grounds or facilities before, during, and/or after school hours. Courts have made clear that the First Amendment prohibits school staff from promoting religion or engaging in religious expression with students because such behavior would be an official endorsement of those religious viewpoints.

This assessment also includes laws that promote the practice of religion by students in ways that are discriminatory toward other students or disruptive to the educational environment. The First Amendment guarantees students the right to engage in religious activities in schools to the same extent students can engage in secular expressive activities. At the same time, schools may set reasonable time, place, and manner restrictions on these activities. However, some states have passed laws that grant religious students special privileges or allow religious expression that harasses other students.

Released Time Laws

Some state laws require or allow school districts to provide “released time” for students to attend private religious education.

To meet constitutional requirements, this religious instruction must be outside school grounds, the school may not encourage participation, and school resources may not be spent to facilitate this religious education. Unfortunately, these released time programs may compromise the education of both participating and non-participating students if they detract from class time. While most laws establishing released time are permissive, meaning they allow school districts to set their own released time policies, at least one state has a mandatory released time law that places requirements on school districts. This item indicates state laws that allow (or require) released time policies and also laws that allow students to receive academic credit for religious education classes taught outside school grounds.

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their beliefs on health care laws, targeting women's health care in particular. While court precedents have limited the effect that these extremist groups can have on federal law, these organizations nonetheless have been able to push through religious exemptions and privileges affecting health care in nearly every state.

Negative laws affecting health care generally relate to issues of paramount concern to religious conservatives: abortion, contraception, sterilization, end-of-life care, and faith healing. In addition to compromising the separation of religion and government, these intrusive laws and policies can also have a drastically negative impact on people by limiting access to essential health care, especially for groups that already face discrimination or are otherwise vulnerable.

POSITIVE LAWS & POLICIES

Medical Aid-in-Dying Laws

This item indicates laws that allow a terminally ill, mentally competent adult to request and obtain medication that brings about a peaceful death. Prohibitions on suicide, assisted suicide, and homicide do not apply to individuals taking appropriate actions in accordance with these laws.

NEGATIVE LAWS & POLICIES

Denial of Care Laws

This item indicates laws and policies that allow religious providers (including individual health care workers and institutional providers like hospitals) to refrain from providing various types of health care that conflict with their religious beliefs. Sometimes called "freedom of conscience" laws or "religious refusals,"

these provisions may effectively supersede rules of professional ethics, medical best practices, and protections against medical negligence in order to privilege the religious beliefs of providers. These laws most often allow providers to refuse services relating to abortion, contraception, and sterilization, but some states have even broader exemptions.

While many denial of care laws echo existing exemptions at the federal level, states may pass laws that apply the exemptions more broadly or extend them to additional types of institutions, including those that do not receive federal funding. As indicated on each scorecard, some states allow only private institutions to refuse to provide abortion services, while others have broader provisions that allow any health care institution to refuse to provide such care. States may also have laws that allow at least some health care providers to refuse to provide contraception and/or sterilization services.

Some states specifically allow health care providers to receive licensure or accreditation, or to be treated as if they were licensed or accredited, if they are initially denied licensure or accreditation for a reason that conflicts with their religious beliefs. For example, if a professional accrediting organization prohibits discrimination against LGBTQ patients, a health care provider might still be considered accredited if they discriminate against these patients because of their religious beliefs.

Child Negligence Exemptions for Faith Healing

This item indicates laws that carve holes into state law protections against child negligence or medical neglect, protecting individuals from legal consequences for the far-too-frequent tragic outcomes of faith healing imposed on minors. These laws typically protect the faith healers and parents or guardians from any penalties when a child dies or is severely harmed as a result of these practices or when a child is denied appropriate treatment for religious reasons. With these exemptions in place, law enforcement has limited ability to prosecute. State laws may include religious exemptions to civil liability, criminal laws, or both.

Nonmedical Exemptions to Vaccination

Every state has laws that require children to receive various vaccinations prior to attending public school. This item indicates that the state has nonmedical exemptions to those laws, which endanger young people and risk public health. Personal exemptions allow a parent to opt their child out of the vaccination requirement for basically any reason, which is often framed as a philosophy or belief. Religious exemptions allow a parent to opt their child out of the vaccination requirement based on their religious beliefs, sometimes associated with their particular denomination. There is evidence that those who seek to avoid vaccination will take advantage of either type of nonmedical exemption, depending on what is available under state law.

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws that privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs. Broader statutes allow religious individuals and organizations to avoid general legal requirements that burden their exercise of religion. Some states have created special privileges for religious organizations and places of worship, allowing them to avoid taxes or other legal requirements that apply to other types of nonprofits.

Rather than enhancing religious freedom, these laws and policies undermine it. They often seek to enshrine a particular set of religious beliefs (such as those held by Christian nationalists) into the law by creating exceptions to specific legal requirements that are only relevant to those groups.

For example, a state law may create a religious exemption to civil rights laws specifically for wedding service providers so that they are not required to serve same-sex couples. Alternately, the law may purport to protect individuals and businesses from discrimination because of their beliefs, but only to protect only certain narrow beliefs, such as the belief that the only moral form of sexual intercourse is between heterosexual married couples. Although limited religious exemptions must be included in some laws in order for them to comply with the Free Exercise Clause of the First Amendment, the exemptions Christian nationalists seek are significantly broader, in some cases undermining the very purpose of the law.

POSITIVE LAWS & POLICIES

Limitations on Clergy Privilege

This item identifies state laws that limit clergy privilege to protect the safety and well-being of children. Clergy-penitent privilege is a right recognized in all 50 states that provides confidentiality for discussions between religious leaders and their followers. This privilege is most frequently referenced in the Catholic practice of confession, but it pertains to other religions as well. The privilege is very broad and generally prohibits any court from compelling testimony from a clergy member. Unfortunately, because the privilege is so broad, it can sometimes prevent the reporting of child abuse and lead to other negative outcomes.

A significant number of states seek to protect youth by making clergy mandatory reporters for suspected child abuse and neglect, like educators and healthcare providers. This means that if there is a reasonable cause for a clergy member to believe

a child is being abused, they are required to report this suspicion to state authorities. A smaller number of states provide explicit exceptions to the clergy privilege for child abuse. This is important because, even with mandatory reporting, if communication is still privileged, it is more difficult to investigate the situation or enforce the required reporting.

NEGATIVE LAWS & POLICIES

State Religious Freedom Restoration Acts

Based on U.S. Supreme Court precedent, the First Amendment's Free Exercise clause does not limit the ability of the federal government to pass neutral laws of general applicability, even if they incidentally burden religious expression. The Court has noted that to do otherwise would allow individual religious belief to supersede the law of the land, resulting in an unworkable society where laws could not be applied evenly.

Despite this warning, Congress passed the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA) at the federal level, and a number of states have followed by passing their own version of this law.



Anti-mask, anti-lockdown and anti-vaccine protesters stage a demonstration.

Photo by Ilyas Tayfun Salci / Shutterstock.com

RFRA require the government to meet a very difficult test when they incidentally burden religious expression—they must show that the government interest is compelling and that the government used the least restrictive means to achieve that interest.

Over time, as predicted by the Supreme Court, RFRA have been misused at both the state and federal levels to carve out exemptions that privilege particular religious viewpoints. Christian nationalists seek to apply these laws in new ways, such as undermining civil rights laws that protect LGBTQ people and women from discrimination. This item indicates states that have statutory language similar to that of the federal RFRA.

Religious Exemptions to Enforcement

This item assesses state laws that include religious exemptions to otherwise generally applicable requirements. Specifically, this item reviews specific types of religious exemptions frequently sought by Christian nationalists.

For example, several states allow foster care and adoption agencies that receive state funding to discriminate against potential parents and, in some states, even the vulnerable youth themselves, based on their religious beliefs. This most negatively impacts single people, LGBTQ people, atheists, and religious minorities. These laws are especially harmful to foster youth because they reduce the number of qualified families, which in turn denies them the chance to find loving, permanent homes.

A handful of states have created exemptions to civil rights laws, allowing individuals and businesses to discriminate against same-sex couples based on their religious beliefs about marriage. Not surprisingly, in each case these states fail to provide any nondiscrimination protections for LGBTQ people in the first place. Regardless, these religious exemptions are stigmatizing and harmful, and they can override local nondiscrimination protections.

A few states allow government officials, such as county clerks and judges, to invoke their religious beliefs about marriage as a legitimate reason to opt out of providing government services to same-sex couples. Although these laws typically require that the couple be served by other officials, that may not be possible in some offices. Regardless, the couple is subject to stigmatization and discrimination that is based on religion and sponsored by the government.

Tax Exemptions for Places of Worship

Most states exempt churches and other places of worship, as well as other religious organizations and nonprofits, from various state taxes. However, this item indicates laws or policies that provide special tax exemptions or limited filing require-

ments for religious organizations or places of worship that are not available to secular nonprofits. For example, some states allow religious organizations or places of worship to omit initial tax exemption documentation, while others may exempt these organizations from filing any annual return. When these exemptions are in place, it is impossible for the government to detect fraud and misconduct within these organizations.

Most states offer tax exemptions for parsonages or other dwellings provided to clergy, in effect subsidizing their housing. Although similar provisions exist in federal law, this item indicates exemptions from state-level taxes.

Nearly every state offers tax exemptions for property owned by religious organizations and places of worship, but such exemptions are not typically available to other nonprofits. In some instances, these exemptions are granted automatically to places of worship but only granted to other nonprofits conditionally or after a lengthy approval process.

Some states offer religious organizations and places of worship an exemption from state sales tax that is not available to other nonprofits. For example, these states may limit the types of nonprofits that can apply sales tax exemptions, or they might automatically approve religious organizations for these exemptions while requiring other types of nonprofits to apply for approval.

Anti-Blasphemy Laws

State anti-blasphemy laws were long ago ruled unconstitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court. The *Joseph Burstyn, Inc. v. Wilson* (1952) decision held that “[i]t is not the business of government in our nation to suppress real or imagined attacks upon a particular religious doctrine, whether they appear in publications, speeches, or motion pictures.” This item indicates that the state law still contains inactive anti-blasphemy provisions.

Distribution of Religious License Plate Funding

This item indicates laws or policies that permit funding from the sale of specialty religious license plates (such as “In God We Trust” plates) to go to non-governmental organizations. In some states, this mechanism has been used to secretly provide funding to Christian nationalist groups without informing the purchasers of these license plates.

PARTNER PERSPECTIVE

County Sheriffs: Targets for Christian Nationalists

CLOEE COOPER

Research Analyst, Political Research Associates

County sheriffs have featured heavily in the right-wing imagination for generations. Their role as elected law enforcement officials, ostensibly accountable to their constituents, makes them uniquely suited to support local control favored by conservative extremists. While the office of sheriff and law enforcement more broadly has been critical to upholding White supremacy since this country's founding, there has been a concerted effort in the last decade to mobilize sheriffs towards further supporting and expanding a patriotic vision of the United States in line with Christian nationalism.

Last year, a detective at the Knox County, Tennessee, sheriff's department, Grayson Fritts, gave a sermon at his church calling government and police to enforce the death penalty for all LGBTQ people. A few months later, the county sheriff of Ohio County, Kentucky, used his office's public Facebook page to post an explicitly Christian prayer. And at the close of the year, Washington state legislator Matt Shea, who worked closely with a right wing association of patriot movement sheriffs, was kicked out of the Republican state caucus for writing a manifesto on the "Biblical Basis for War," which promotes a Christian Patriot militia's rights to "kill all males" who support abortion, same-sex marriage, or communism.

Organizations and strategies outlined by segments of the Christian Right have laid the groundwork for sheriffs who use publicly funded offices to blatantly promote Christian nationalism. The Constitutional Sheriffs and Peace Officers and Association (CSPOA), an organization Matt Shea helped shape, is an association of current and former sheriffs, militia, military, and law enforcement, founded by former Sheriff Richard Mack in 2010. Combining ideological themes from the anti-government White supremacist Posse Comitatus movement, with Christian Reconstructionism, CSPOA supports a decentralized government that places significant power in the hands of sheriffs.

The network has claimed affiliation with more than 400 sheriffs since 2013, 250 of whom are currently in office. Most commonly associated with defiance of statewide

gun safety measures by declaring their counties sanctuaries for the Second Amendment and, more recently, refusing to enforce COVID-19 shelter-in-place orders, these sheriffs believe in county supremacy and enshrining the sheriff with the ultimate power to interpret the US Constitution at the county level, a power favored by Christian nationalists who see federal and state governments upholding secular values.

In their vision, local churches would supply the sheriff with posses and county militia, an idea originally conceived by the theocratic Christian Reconstructionist leader R.J. Rushdoony in 1973 as a strategy to defend biblical law against a perceived secular federal government. Perhaps relatedly, Alabama passed legislation in 2019 to allow creation of law enforcement linked to a specific church, and over the last several years, numerous states have considered bills to allow individuals to carry guns in and defend churches.

Finally, in one of the most blatant examples of outreach by Christian nationalists to sheriffs, well-known former-sheriff Joe Arpaio recently formed a new organization called America's Sheriff to "defend America's Judeo-Christian heritage as depicted in the Bible, where God looks to the counselors and judges to restore the Tarnished City to the Faithful City." It is unclear what form this new organization will take, but Arpaio says that it will "promote, protect and fight" for the rights of law enforcement officers and that it will "fill the void left by our virtually inert Justice Department."

Political Research Associates draws on decades of research on the Christian Right, and nearly a decade of research on the Patriot Movement to analyze this trend and offer public education resources to the broader public. For more information visit <https://www.politicalresearch.org/>.

ISSUES

Acknowledging Context

Research Process

Each scorecard assesses the presence or absence of state-wide laws and policies affecting the separation of religion and government, either positively or negatively. In addition to the 50 states, scorecards are provided for the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. Research for this project was conducted by the lawyers and law clerks at the American Atheists Legal Center, based on established criteria for each law and policy item, and compiled into a scorecard for each state. This research was drawn from publicly available sources.

The evaluations of each law and policy item are based on the nature of the item, typical statewide laws and policies concerning that issue, and our determination about best practices for that issue. States are grouped into one of the three general categories based on a subjective analysis of their laws. During the course of researching and drafting this report, a number of states passed relevant laws or policies. This report includes assessments of laws and policies passed as of November 1, 2020.

“Clauses” refer to state constitutional provisions. “Laws” refer to statewide statutes, either passed through a state’s legislative process or through referendum. “Policies” refer to administrative regulations and policies from a state executive agency that have a legal effect. “Court decisions” refer to final rulings by a relevant state or federal court with a statewide jurisdiction and for which the decision is controlling law.

Implementation of Laws & Policies

The State of the Secular States report is an assessment of state-wide laws and policies that affect the separation of religion and government in each state as well as the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. This report is intended to support advocacy on these issues, both by providing a benchmark for existing laws and policies and as a roadmap for how advocates can work to preserve the separation of religion and government in their own communities and states. However, this report is not an evaluation of statewide advocacy efforts. We recognize that advocacy

for statewide law and policy efforts relating to the separation of religion and government varies widely in different regions and is based on state politics, historical context, legislative concerns, state constitutions, and countless other factors.

Moreover, this report does not measure the implementation of laws and policies that affect the separation of religion and government. It reviews only the presence or absence of the listed law and policy items. For example, we note on Michigan’s scorecard that the state applies religious exemptions to foster care and adoption, although litigation has narrowed the applicability of those exemptions. Similarly, we note that several state constitutions include a religious test for public office, even though those provisions are not currently operative.

Future Categories

This report differs from the previous edition in that it includes additional criteria as well as some modified assessments of previous criteria. We intend to continue to iterate upon this report annually in order to provide a useful resource for advocates and lawmakers. Some issues we are considering for future inclusion are:

- Religious exemptions to public health emergency authorizations
- Religious data collection under state law
- Restrictions on hospital mergers
- Laws mandating recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance in schools
- Religion in state-required oaths
- Separation of religion and government in prisons
- Abortion prohibitions

National Summary

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲	38
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲	49
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲	21
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS		
Employment	▲	50
Housing	▲	50
Public Accommodations	▲	47
Education	▲	29
Religious Exemptions	▼	24
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼	5

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by religious extremists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲	4
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲	21
PROTECTION FROM FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION	▲	39
SEX EDUCATION		
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲	8
Abstinence Only Programs	▼	28
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼	6
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS		
Instructor Qualifications	▲	12
Testing & Evaluation	▲	9
Child Abuse Prevention	▲	2
Exemptions	▼	13
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼	5
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼	11
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼	8
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼	13
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼	30
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼	14
RELEASED TIME LAWS		
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼	26
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼	6

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care and parental rights. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲	8
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS		
Private Institutions May Refuse Abortion Services	▼	44
Any Institution May Refuse Abortion Services	▼	34
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼	19
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼	21
Professional Licensure	▼	6
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING		
Civil Exemption	▼	33
Criminal Exemption	▼	31
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼	46

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE		
Mandatory Reporting	▲	31
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲	13
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼	21
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT		
Foster Care & Adoption	▼	11
Marriage-Related Services	▼	2
State Officials	▼	2
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP		
Limited Filing Requirements	▼	17
Parsonage Exemption	▼	41
Property Tax Exemption	▼	50
Sales Tax Exemption	▼	21
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼	6
DISTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUS LICENSE PLATE FUNDING	▼	13

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	No. Number of states and territories with provision
	▼ Negative provision in place	

The state of the Secular States report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

SCORECARDS

State Assessments

This report identifies four categories of public policy in each state that affect religious equality: Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections, Education & Youth, Health Care & Wellness, and Special Privileges for Religion. We assess nearly 50 related law and policy measures in each state as well as Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia. The states have been grouped into three broad categories, but they have not been individually ranked.

Strong Protections for Religious Equality

In addition to strong constitutional protections that protect the separation of religion and government, states in this category have laws and policies that protect individuals from religion-based harm, such as child marriage or conversion therapy. Generally, these states allow few religious exemptions or special privileges for religion.

Basic Separation of Religion and Government

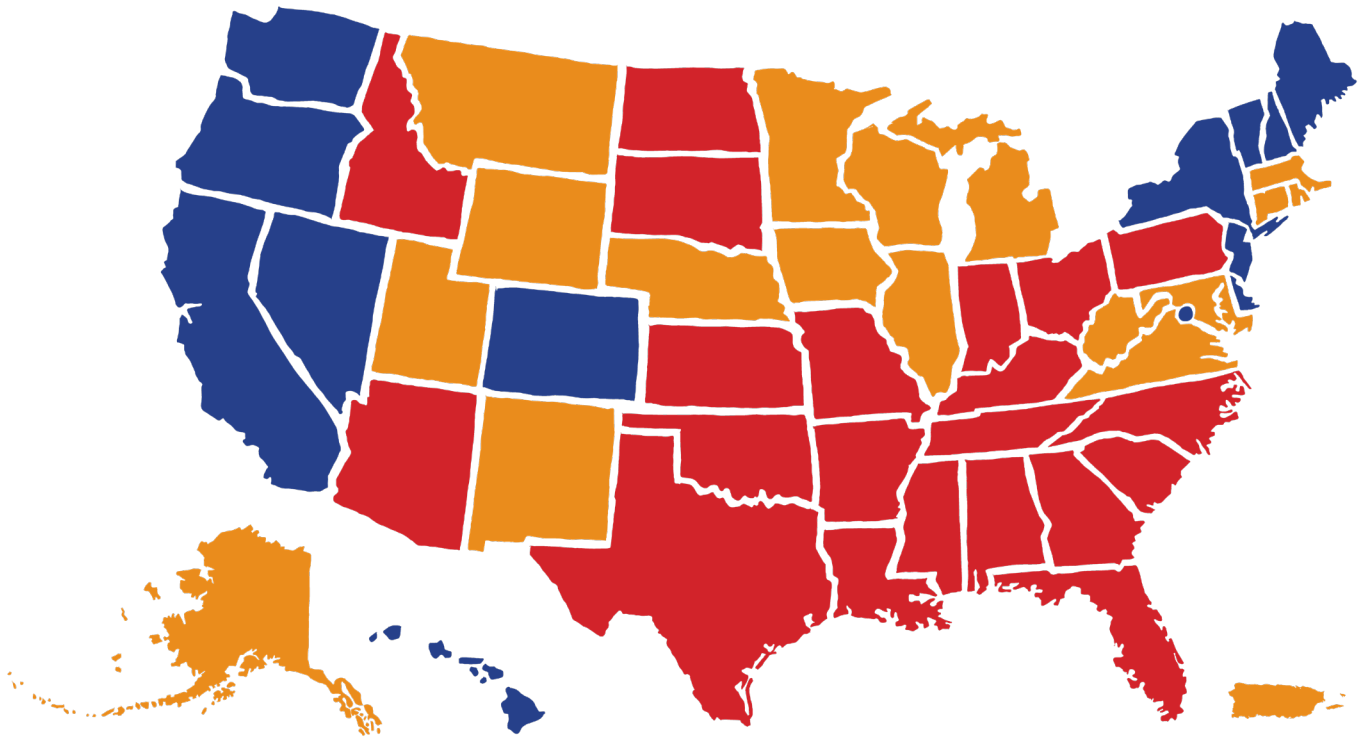
States in this category may have constitutional provisions that protect religious equality by ensuring the separation of religion and government, but they have few laws to protect individuals from religion-based harm. These states generally have at least some religious exemptions or special privileges for religion.

Religious Exemptions That Undermine Equality

States in this category have several laws that establish religious exemptions or special privileges for religion and provide few protections for the separation of religion and government. Some of these states have passed laws to promote false Christian nationalist narratives, to allow religious exemptions to civil rights protections, or to enshrine particular religious views into the law.

SCORECARDS

National Summary Map



Strong Protections for Religious Equality

[13 STATES & TERRITORIES]

- California
- Colorado
- Delaware
- Hawaii
- Maine
- Nevada
- New Hampshire
- New Jersey
- New York
- Oregon
- Vermont
- Washington
- Washington, DC



Religious Exemptions That Undermine Equality

[21 STATES]

- Alabama
- Arizona
- Arkansas
- Florida
- Georgia
- Idaho
- Indiana
- Kansas
- Kentucky
- Louisiana
- Mississippi
- Missouri
- North Carolina
- North Dakota
- Ohio
- Oklahoma
- Pennsylvania
- South Carolina
- South Dakota
- Tennessee
- Texas



Basic Separation of Religion and Government

[18 STATES & TERRITORIES]

- Alaska
- Connecticut
- Illinois
- Iowa
- Maryland
- Massachusetts
- Michigan
- Minnesota
- Montana
- Nebraska
- New Mexico
- Puerto Rico
- Rhode Island
- Utah
- Virginia
- West Virginia
- Wisconsin
- Wyoming

Alabama

RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS THAT UNDERMINE EQUALITY

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by religious extremists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
PROTECTION FROM FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care and parental rights. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Private Institutions May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Any Institution May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Professional Licensure	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	
Civil Exemption	▼
Criminal Exemption	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
State Officials	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼
DISTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUS LICENSE PLATE FUNDING	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The state of the Secular States report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Alaska



BASIC SEPARATION OF RELIGION AND GOVERNMENT

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by religious extremists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
PROTECTION FROM FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care and parental rights. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Private Institutions May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Any Institution May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Professional Licensure	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	
Civil Exemption	▼
Criminal Exemption	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
State Officials	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼
DISTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUS LICENSE PLATE FUNDING	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The state of the Secular States report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Arizona

RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS THAT UNDERMINE EQUALITY

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by religious extremists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
PROTECTION FROM FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care and parental rights. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Private Institutions May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Any Institution May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Professional Licensure	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	
Civil Exemption	▼
Criminal Exemption	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
State Officials	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼
DISTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUS LICENSE PLATE FUNDING	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The state of the Secular States report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Arkansas

RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS THAT UNDERMINE EQUALITY

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by religious extremists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
PROTECTION FROM FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care and parental rights. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Private Institutions May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Any Institution May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Professional Licensure	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	
Civil Exemption	▼
Criminal Exemption	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
State Officials	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼
DISTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUS LICENSE PLATE FUNDING	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The state of the Secular States report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org



Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by religious extremists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
PROTECTION FROM FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care and parental rights. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Private Institutions May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Any Institution May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Professional Licensure	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	
Civil Exemption	▼
Criminal Exemption	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
State Officials	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼
DISTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUS LICENSE PLATE FUNDING	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	△ Positive provision not in place	▽ Negative provision not in place

The state of the Secular States report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org



Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by religious extremists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
PROTECTION FROM FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care and parental rights. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Private Institutions May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Any Institution May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Professional Licensure	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	
Civil Exemption	▼
Criminal Exemption	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
State Officials	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼
DISTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUS LICENSE PLATE FUNDING	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	△ Positive provision not in place	▽ Negative provision not in place

The state of the Secular States report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Connecticut

BASIC SEPARATION OF RELIGION AND GOVERNMENT

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by religious extremists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
PROTECTION FROM FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care and parental rights. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Private Institutions May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Any Institution May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Professional Licensure	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	
Civil Exemption	▼
Criminal Exemption	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
State Officials	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼
DISTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUS LICENSE PLATE FUNDING	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The state of the Secular States report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org



Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by religious extremists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
PROTECTION FROM FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care and parental rights. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Private Institutions May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Any Institution May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Professional Licensure	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	
Civil Exemption	▼
Criminal Exemption	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
State Officials	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼
DISTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUS LICENSE PLATE FUNDING	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The state of the Secular States report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Florida

RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS THAT UNDERMINE EQUALITY

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by religious extremists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
PROTECTION FROM FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care and parental rights. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Private Institutions May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Any Institution May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Professional Licensure	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	
Civil Exemption	▼
Criminal Exemption	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
State Officials	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼
DISTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUS LICENSE PLATE FUNDING	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The state of the Secular States report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org



Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by religious extremists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
PROTECTION FROM FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care and parental rights. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Private Institutions May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Any Institution May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Professional Licensure	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	
Civil Exemption	▼
Criminal Exemption	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
State Officials	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼
DISTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUS LICENSE PLATE FUNDING	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The state of the Secular States report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org



Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by religious extremists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
PROTECTION FROM FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care and parental rights. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Private Institutions May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Any Institution May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Professional Licensure	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	
Civil Exemption	▼
Criminal Exemption	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
State Officials	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼
DISTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUS LICENSE PLATE FUNDING	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The state of the Secular States report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Idaho

RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS THAT UNDERMINE EQUALITY

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by religious extremists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
PROTECTION FROM FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care and parental rights. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Private Institutions May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Any Institution May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Professional Licensure	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	
Civil Exemption	▼
Criminal Exemption	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
State Officials	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼
DISTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUS LICENSE PLATE FUNDING	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The state of the Secular States report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Illinois

BASIC SEPARATION OF RELIGION AND GOVERNMENT

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by religious extremists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
PROTECTION FROM FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care and parental rights. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Private Institutions May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Any Institution May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Professional Licensure	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	
Civil Exemption	▼
Criminal Exemption	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
State Officials	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼
DISTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUS LICENSE PLATE FUNDING	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The state of the Secular States report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Indiana

RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS THAT UNDERMINE EQUALITY

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by religious extremists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
PROTECTION FROM FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care and parental rights. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Private Institutions May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Any Institution May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Professional Licensure	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	
Civil Exemption	▼
Criminal Exemption	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
State Officials	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼
DISTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUS LICENSE PLATE FUNDING	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The state of the Secular States report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Iowa

BASIC SEPARATION OF RELIGION AND GOVERNMENT

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by religious extremists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
PROTECTION FROM FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care and parental rights. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Private Institutions May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Any Institution May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Professional Licensure	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	
Civil Exemption	▼
Criminal Exemption	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
State Officials	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼
DISTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUS LICENSE PLATE FUNDING	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The state of the Secular States report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Kansas

RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS THAT UNDERMINE EQUALITY

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by religious extremists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
PROTECTION FROM FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care and parental rights. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Private Institutions May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Any Institution May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Professional Licensure	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	
Civil Exemption	▼
Criminal Exemption	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
State Officials	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼
DISTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUS LICENSE PLATE FUNDING	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The state of the Secular States report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Kentucky

RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS THAT UNDERMINE EQUALITY

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by religious extremists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
PROTECTION FROM FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care and parental rights. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Private Institutions May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Any Institution May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Professional Licensure	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	
Civil Exemption	▼
Criminal Exemption	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
State Officials	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼
DISTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUS LICENSE PLATE FUNDING	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The state of the Secular States report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Louisiana

RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS THAT UNDERMINE EQUALITY

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by religious extremists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
PROTECTION FROM FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care and parental rights. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Private Institutions May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Any Institution May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Professional Licensure	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	
Civil Exemption	▼
Criminal Exemption	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
State Officials	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼
DISTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUS LICENSE PLATE FUNDING	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The state of the Secular States report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org



Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by religious extremists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
PROTECTION FROM FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care and parental rights. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Private Institutions May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Any Institution May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Professional Licensure	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	
Civil Exemption	▼
Criminal Exemption	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
State Officials	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼
DISTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUS LICENSE PLATE FUNDING	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The state of the Secular States report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Maryland

BASIC SEPARATION OF RELIGION AND GOVERNMENT

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by religious extremists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
PROTECTION FROM FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care and parental rights. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Private Institutions May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Any Institution May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Professional Licensure	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	
Civil Exemption	▼
Criminal Exemption	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
State Officials	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼
DISTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUS LICENSE PLATE FUNDING	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The state of the Secular States report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Massachusetts

BASIC SEPARATION OF RELIGION AND GOVERNMENT

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by religious extremists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
PROTECTION FROM FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care and parental rights. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Private Institutions May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Any Institution May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Professional Licensure	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	
Civil Exemption	▼
Criminal Exemption	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
State Officials	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼
DISTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUS LICENSE PLATE FUNDING	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The state of the Secular States report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Michigan

BASIC SEPARATION OF RELIGION AND GOVERNMENT

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by religious extremists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
PROTECTION FROM FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care and parental rights. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Private Institutions May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Any Institution May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Professional Licensure	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	
Civil Exemption	▼
Criminal Exemption	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
State Officials	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼
DISTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUS LICENSE PLATE FUNDING	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The state of the Secular States report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Minnesota

BASIC SEPARATION OF RELIGION AND GOVERNMENT

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by religious extremists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
PROTECTION FROM FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care and parental rights. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Private Institutions May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Any Institution May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Professional Licensure	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	
Civil Exemption	▼
Criminal Exemption	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
State Officials	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼
DISTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUS LICENSE PLATE FUNDING	▼

KEY	▲	Positive provision in place	▼	Negative provision in place
	▲	Positive provision not in place	▼	Negative provision not in place

The state of the Secular States report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Mississippi

RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS THAT UNDERMINE EQUALITY

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by religious extremists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
PROTECTION FROM FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care and parental rights. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Private Institutions May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Any Institution May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Professional Licensure	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	
Civil Exemption	▼
Criminal Exemption	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
State Officials	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼
DISTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUS LICENSE PLATE FUNDING	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The state of the Secular States report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Missouri

RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS THAT UNDERMINE EQUALITY

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by religious extremists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
PROTECTION FROM FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care and parental rights. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Private Institutions May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Any Institution May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Professional Licensure	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	
Civil Exemption	▼
Criminal Exemption	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
State Officials	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼
DISTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUS LICENSE PLATE FUNDING	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The state of the Secular States report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Montana

BASIC SEPARATION OF RELIGION AND GOVERNMENT

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by religious extremists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
PROTECTION FROM FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care and parental rights. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Private Institutions May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Any Institution May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Professional Licensure	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	
Civil Exemption	▼
Criminal Exemption	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
State Officials	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼
DISTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUS LICENSE PLATE FUNDING	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The state of the Secular States report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Nebraska

BASIC SEPARATION OF RELIGION AND GOVERNMENT

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by religious extremists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
PROTECTION FROM FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care and parental rights. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Private Institutions May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Any Institution May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Professional Licensure	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	
Civil Exemption	▼
Criminal Exemption	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
State Officials	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼
DISTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUS LICENSE PLATE FUNDING	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The state of the Secular States report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org



Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by religious extremists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
PROTECTION FROM FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care and parental rights. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Private Institutions May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Any Institution May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Professional Licensure	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	
Civil Exemption	▼
Criminal Exemption	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
State Officials	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼
DISTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUS LICENSE PLATE FUNDING	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The state of the Secular States report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

New Hampshire

STRONG PROTECTIONS FOR RELIGIOUS EQUALITY

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by religious extremists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
PROTECTION FROM FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care and parental rights. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Private Institutions May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Any Institution May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Professional Licensure	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	
Civil Exemption	▼
Criminal Exemption	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
State Officials	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼
DISTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUS LICENSE PLATE FUNDING	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	△ Positive provision not in place	▽ Negative provision not in place

The state of the Secular States report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org



Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by religious extremists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
PROTECTION FROM FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care and parental rights. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Private Institutions May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Any Institution May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Professional Licensure	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	
Civil Exemption	▼
Criminal Exemption	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
State Officials	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼
DISTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUS LICENSE PLATE FUNDING	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The state of the Secular States report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

New Mexico

BASIC SEPARATION OF RELIGION AND GOVERNMENT

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by religious extremists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
PROTECTION FROM FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care and parental rights. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Private Institutions May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Any Institution May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Professional Licensure	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	
Civil Exemption	▼
Criminal Exemption	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
State Officials	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼
DISTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUS LICENSE PLATE FUNDING	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The state of the Secular States report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org



Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by religious extremists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
PROTECTION FROM FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care and parental rights. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Private Institutions May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Any Institution May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Professional Licensure	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	
Civil Exemption	▼
Criminal Exemption	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
State Officials	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼
DISTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUS LICENSE PLATE FUNDING	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The state of the Secular States report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

North Carolina



RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS THAT UNDERMINE EQUALITY

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by religious extremists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
PROTECTION FROM FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care and parental rights. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Private Institutions May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Any Institution May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Professional Licensure	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	
Civil Exemption	▼
Criminal Exemption	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
State Officials	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼
DISTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUS LICENSE PLATE FUNDING	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The state of the Secular States report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

North Dakota

RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS THAT UNDERMINE EQUALITY

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by religious extremists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
PROTECTION FROM FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care and parental rights. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Private Institutions May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Any Institution May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Professional Licensure	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	
Civil Exemption	▼
Criminal Exemption	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
State Officials	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼
DISTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUS LICENSE PLATE FUNDING	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The state of the Secular States report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Ohio

RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS THAT UNDERMINE EQUALITY

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by religious extremists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
PROTECTION FROM FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care and parental rights. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Private Institutions May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Any Institution May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Professional Licensure	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	
Civil Exemption	▼
Criminal Exemption	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
State Officials	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼
DISTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUS LICENSE PLATE FUNDING	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The state of the Secular States report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Oklahoma



RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS THAT UNDERMINE EQUALITY

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by religious extremists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
PROTECTION FROM FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care and parental rights. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Private Institutions May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Any Institution May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Professional Licensure	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	
Civil Exemption	▼
Criminal Exemption	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
State Officials	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼
DISTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUS LICENSE PLATE FUNDING	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The state of the Secular States report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org



Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by religious extremists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
PROTECTION FROM FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care and parental rights. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Private Institutions May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Any Institution May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Professional Licensure	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	
Civil Exemption	▼
Criminal Exemption	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
State Officials	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼
DISTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUS LICENSE PLATE FUNDING	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	△ Positive provision not in place	▽ Negative provision not in place

The state of the Secular States report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Pennsylvania

RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS THAT UNDERMINE EQUALITY

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by religious extremists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
PROTECTION FROM FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care and parental rights. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Private Institutions May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Any Institution May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Professional Licensure	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	
Civil Exemption	▼
Criminal Exemption	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
State Officials	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼
DISTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUS LICENSE PLATE FUNDING	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The state of the Secular States report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Puerto Rico

BASIC SEPARATION OF RELIGION AND GOVERNMENT

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by religious extremists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
PROTECTION FROM FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care and parental rights. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Private Institutions May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Any Institution May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Professional Licensure	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	
Civil Exemption	▼
Criminal Exemption	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
State Officials	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼
DISTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUS LICENSE PLATE FUNDING	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The state of the Secular States report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Rhode Island

BASIC SEPARATION OF RELIGION AND GOVERNMENT

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by religious extremists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
PROTECTION FROM FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care and parental rights. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Private Institutions May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Any Institution May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Professional Licensure	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	
Civil Exemption	▼
Criminal Exemption	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
State Officials	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼
DISTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUS LICENSE PLATE FUNDING	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The state of the Secular States report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

South Carolina



RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS THAT UNDERMINE EQUALITY

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by religious extremists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
PROTECTION FROM FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care and parental rights. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Private Institutions May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Any Institution May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Professional Licensure	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	
Civil Exemption	▼
Criminal Exemption	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
State Officials	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼
DISTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUS LICENSE PLATE FUNDING	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The state of the Secular States report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

South Dakota

RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS THAT UNDERMINE EQUALITY

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by religious extremists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
PROTECTION FROM FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care and parental rights. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Private Institutions May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Any Institution May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Professional Licensure	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	
Civil Exemption	▼
Criminal Exemption	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
State Officials	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼
DISTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUS LICENSE PLATE FUNDING	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The state of the Secular States report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Tennessee

RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS THAT UNDERMINE EQUALITY

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by religious extremists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
PROTECTION FROM FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care and parental rights. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Private Institutions May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Any Institution May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Professional Licensure	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	
Civil Exemption	▼
Criminal Exemption	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
State Officials	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼
DISTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUS LICENSE PLATE FUNDING	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The state of the Secular States report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Texas

RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS THAT UNDERMINE EQUALITY

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by religious extremists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
PROTECTION FROM FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care and parental rights. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Private Institutions May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Any Institution May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Professional Licensure	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	
Civil Exemption	▼
Criminal Exemption	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
State Officials	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼
DISTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUS LICENSE PLATE FUNDING	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	△ Positive provision not in place	▽ Negative provision not in place

The state of the Secular States report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Utah

BASIC SEPARATION OF RELIGION AND GOVERNMENT

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by religious extremists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
PROTECTION FROM FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care and parental rights. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Private Institutions May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Any Institution May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Professional Licensure	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	
Civil Exemption	▼
Criminal Exemption	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
State Officials	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼
DISTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUS LICENSE PLATE FUNDING	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The state of the Secular States report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org



Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by religious extremists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
PROTECTION FROM FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care and parental rights. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Private Institutions May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Any Institution May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Professional Licensure	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	
Civil Exemption	▼
Criminal Exemption	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
State Officials	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼
DISTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUS LICENSE PLATE FUNDING	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The state of the Secular States report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Virginia

BASIC SEPARATION OF RELIGION AND GOVERNMENT

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by religious extremists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
PROTECTION FROM FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care and parental rights. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Private Institutions May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Any Institution May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Professional Licensure	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	
Civil Exemption	▼
Criminal Exemption	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
State Officials	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼
DISTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUS LICENSE PLATE FUNDING	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The state of the Secular States report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Washington



STRONG PROTECTIONS FOR RELIGIOUS EQUALITY

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by religious extremists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
PROTECTION FROM FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care and parental rights. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Private Institutions May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Any Institution May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Professional Licensure	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	
Civil Exemption	▼
Criminal Exemption	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
State Officials	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼
DISTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUS LICENSE PLATE FUNDING	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The state of the Secular States report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Washington, DC

STRONG PROTECTIONS FOR RELIGIOUS EQUALITY

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	N/A
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	N/A
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by religious extremists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
PROTECTION FROM FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care and parental rights. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Private Institutions May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Any Institution May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Professional Licensure	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	
Civil Exemption	▼
Criminal Exemption	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
State Officials	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼
DISTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUS LICENSE PLATE FUNDING	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	△ Positive provision not in place	▽ Negative provision not in place

The state of the Secular States report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

West Virginia



BASIC SEPARATION OF RELIGION AND GOVERNMENT

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by religious extremists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
PROTECTION FROM FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care and parental rights. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Private Institutions May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Any Institution May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Professional Licensure	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	
Civil Exemption	▼
Criminal Exemption	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
State Officials	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼
DISTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUS LICENSE PLATE FUNDING	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The state of the Secular States report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Wisconsin

BASIC SEPARATION OF RELIGION AND GOVERNMENT

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by religious extremists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
PROTECTION FROM FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care and parental rights. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Private Institutions May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Any Institution May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Professional Licensure	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	
Civil Exemption	▼
Criminal Exemption	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
State Officials	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼
DISTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUS LICENSE PLATE FUNDING	▼

KEY	▲	Positive provision in place	▼	Negative provision in place
	▲	Positive provision not in place	▼	Negative provision not in place

The state of the Secular States report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

Wyoming

BASIC SEPARATION OF RELIGION AND GOVERNMENT

Constitutional & Nondiscrimination Protections

Nearly every state constitution has provisions that echo the critical protections for religious equality created by the U.S. Constitution. Most states also have statutory nondiscrimination protections in various areas based on religious and nonreligious belief.

STATE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE	▲
STATE FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE	▲
STRONG TAXPAYER STANDING	▲
NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS	
Employment	▲
Housing	▲
Public Accommodations	▲
Education	▲
Religious Exemptions	▼
RELIGIOUS TESTS FOR OFFICE	▼

Education & Youth

The bulk of negative legislation sought by religious extremists targets or has a disproportionate impact on youth. Young people, particularly those who aren't already being influenced by a church, are an easy target for indoctrination.

PROTECTION FROM CHILD MARRIAGE	▲
PROTECTION FROM CONVERSION THERAPY	▲
PROTECTION FROM FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION	▲
SEX EDUCATION	
Comprehensive Sex Education	▲
Abstinence Only Programs	▼
LGBTQ Topics Restricted	▼
HOMESCHOOLING LAWS	
Instructor Qualifications	▲
Testing & Evaluation	▲
Child Abuse Prevention	▲
Exemptions	▼
ANTI-SCIENCE / ANTI-EVOLUTION LAW	▼
BIBLE CLASS LAW	▼
MANDATORY NATIONAL MOTTO DISPLAYS	▼
CAMPUS LICENSE TO DISCRIMINATE LAW	▼
SCHOOL VOUCHERS & TAX CREDITS	▼
SCHOOL PRAYER LAW	▼
RELEASED TIME LAWS	
Permissive or Mandatory School District Policies	▼
Academic Credit for Religious Education	▼

Health Care & Wellness

For decades, religious conservatives have sought to impose their dogmas on health care laws, focusing on reproductive health care and parental rights. The religious beliefs of others should never interfere with a person's ability to access essential health care.

MEDICAL AID-IN-DYING LAW	▲
DENIAL OF CARE LAWS	
Private Institutions May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Any Institution May Refuse Abortion Services	▼
Refusals Related to Contraception	▼
Refusals Related to Sterilization	▼
Professional Licensure	▼
CHILD NEGLIGENCE EXEMPTIONS FOR FAITH HEALING	
Civil Exemption	▼
Criminal Exemption	▼
NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO VACCINATION	▼

Special Privileges for Religion

Many states have laws which privilege religious organizations and religious beliefs. Such measures exempt individuals, groups, or businesses from particular legal requirements that conflict with their religious beliefs.

LIMITATIONS ON CLERGY PRIVILEGE	
Mandatory Reporting	▲
Exceptions for Child Abuse	▲
STATE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT	▼
RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS TO ENFORCEMENT	
Foster Care & Adoption	▼
Marriage-Related Services	▼
State Officials	▼
TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP	
Limited Filing Requirements	▼
Parsonage Exemption	▼
Property Tax Exemption	▼
Sales Tax Exemption	▼
ANTI-BLASPHEMY LAW	▼
DISTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUS LICENSE PLATE FUNDING	▼

KEY	▲ Positive provision in place	▼ Negative provision in place
	▲ Positive provision not in place	▼ Negative provision not in place

The state of the Secular States report is a project of American Atheists. To learn more about our critical state-level advocacy, research, and public policy work, please visit states.atheists.org

ABOUT THIS REPORT

Our Organization

AMERICAN ATHEISTS is a national civil rights organization that works to achieve religious equality for all Americans by protecting what Thomas Jefferson called the “wall of separation” between government and religion created by the First Amendment. We strive to create an environment where atheism and atheists are accepted as members of our nation’s communities and where casual bigotry against our community is seen as abhorrent and unacceptable. We promote understanding of atheists through education, outreach, and community-building and work to end the stigma associated with being an atheist in America.

American Atheists is committed to providing resources and tools to help our local grassroots organizers grow and sustain vibrant communities. By emphasizing activities in the four core areas of our ACES program—Activism, Community, Education, and Service—affiliate groups can provide support for their members while expanding engagement in their local community, improving policy outcomes at every level of government, and normalizing atheism across the nation. To find out more about our State Director program or to find a local affiliate group, please email us at field@atheists.org.

American Atheists seeks to empower its constituents to be effective advocates for state and local policy change. We use cutting-edge tools to inform grassroots leaders about bills and policies that affect the separation of religion and government, which enables them to amplify their outreach to lawmakers. We support these efforts by providing advocacy resources, bill analyses, effective messaging, and assistance with coalition-building and drafting legislation. We are always eager to work with state and local advocates on the various laws and policies discussed in this report. If you are interested in engaging in this work, please email us at legal@atheists.org.

Acknowledgements

This report required a significant amount of meticulous research to ensure the accuracy of each state scorecard. A significant portion of the research was conducted by American Atheists’ 2020 summer law clerks **Emma Hoffman**, **Tyler Jameson**, and **Zachary Toland**. We thank them for their thorough work and their helpful insight into assessment of state law. Special thanks goes to **Adriana Buenaventura Martinez** and **Roberto Silva** for their research and assessment of law and policy measures in Puerto Rico.

We thank **Andrew Torrez**, **Jennifer Driver**, **Cloe Cooper**, and **Dr. Steven Green** for their contributions to this report. We also thank **Sam Gerard** and **John Gibbons** for their assistance with editing, **Tom Van Denburgh** for managing media outreach, **Anthony Crincoli** for designing this report and making it available online, and **Nick Fish** for his strong support for this important work.

Recommended Citation

When referencing this report, we recommend the following citation:

Gill, A.M. (2021). *2020 State of the Secular States*. Cranford, NJ: American Atheists.

This report is available online at:
www.atheists.org/states





American Atheists supporters march in the Cincinnati Pride Parade on June 22, 2019.

Photo by JRoberto Galan / Shutterstock.com

2020 STATE OF THE SECULAR STATES

*A Review of State Law and Policy Affecting the
Separation of Religion and Government*

www.atheists.org/states

