

The 'Freedom' to Discriminate

Arizona Senate Bill 1062, the controversial anti-gay measure that was passed by the state legislature last week and vetoed by Governor Jan Brewer on Wednesday, drew vocal opposition within the GOP. The party's past two presidential nominees, Mitt Romney and John McCain, come out against the bill, along with several state senators who voted for the bill and most of the Grand Canyon State's business community. But while Governor Jan Brewer was still pondering whether to sign or veto the legislation, which would have allowed businesses to refuse to serve customers for religious reasons, there were still some people urging Brewer to sign the legislation.

Michele Bachmann

The Minnesota congresswoman told CNN's Wolf Blitzer on Wednesday that Governor Jan Brewer should not veto the bill for reasons of religious freedom. Bachmann, a 2012 presidential candidate, said that it was important that Senate Bill 1062 be enacted for reasons of tolerance.

Tucker Carlson

Carlson, a conservative pundit who is editor-in-chief of the Daily Caller, said the bill was "tolerance" in an appearance on Fox News. His defense of the bill was "when you try and force me to bake a cake for your gay wedding and threaten me with prison if I don't, that's called fascism."

Louie Gohmert

The Texas congressman who has accused John McCain of supporting al-Qaeda also backs the Arizona bill. In a radio interview, Gohmert said the bill protects religious freedom from secularists. He warned "some are establishing the religion of secularism and everybody else's religion has just got to basically go to blazes."

Rush Limbaugh

The talk radio host has never shied away from controversial opinions and, on Tuesday, Limbaugh said Jan Brewer was being bullied into vetoing the bill by the liberal media. In his opinion, "Religious beliefs can't be used to stop anything the left wants to impose, unless they're Muslim religious beliefs and then we have to honor those. But any other religious beliefs are not permitted."

Russell Pearce

Pearce is the former president of the Arizona Senate who came to national prominence by pushing the state's controversial anti-immigration legislation, Senate Bill 1070, in 2011. However, Pearce's strident stance on issues like immigration alienated many constituents and he became the first state legislator in the history of the Grand Canyon State to be recalled. Pearce hasn't become more moderate in his views since leaving public office. In a letter to the Arizona Republic, he explained his support of Senate Bill 1062, writing "our religious liberties are God-given and government has no business infringing on them."

Ilya Shapiro

Shapiro, a fellow at the Cato Institute, is likely one of the few self-identified supporters of marriage equality to support Senate Bill 1062. In his opinion, the bill simply aligns Arizona law with federal statute books on religious freedom. He believes "[Senate Bill 1062] doesn't mean that people can "do whatever they want"—laws against murder would still trump religious human sacrifice—but it would prevent the government from forcing people to violate their religion if that can at all be avoided. Moreover, there's no mention of sexual orientation (or any other class or category)."