

My name is Jere Webb, I am a real estate broker in Eagle. (221 S. Eagle Rd. 861.2222)

Been a small business owner here in Id for almost 20 years.

Prior to that I was a SDA Pastor serving in TX, Tenn, and CA for almost 30 years.

Doctorate degree from Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena.

Listening to the testimony of several here today recounting the pain they or a loved one have experienced as part of the LGBT Community has reawakened painful memories of my own:

My Sister was married to a pastor for about 20 years who div her to join the gay community.

Really nothing "gay" about it! Not for him, for her or for their child. The very word has been hijacked to mean something different! For many years now we have welcomed him and his partner to family functions involving his Son and treated him with respect and courtesy.

In my life I have also witnessed the painful breakup of far too many heterosexual homes, all too often because of adultery! In fact my sense is that if we were to have a parade of honest witnesses on THIS subject the heart-rending testimonies could go on for years!

House Bill 2 - Humm - let's pass a law that will stop **ALL of this pain!** I am tired of seeing our children including my own grandchildren having to be shuttled between parents who don't live together anymore. If legislation would solve the problem I would be all in for passing House Bill 2.

But it won't solve the problem as I see it; and in fact it will only further complicate an already difficult situation and lead to more litigation. . . we don't need more laws promoting employment opportunities for the attorneys - my son and son in law are attorneys and they are busy enough already!

And as a small business owner I know what it is like to not be able to afford justice! Years ago I was an owner of a small clothing business and we had what I thought were trademark protections filed by a very good attorney, Ken Pedersen right here in Boise. But when a huge corporation threatened us with a lawsuit his good counsel was "even though we were in the right we could not afford to litigate. So we quickly folded on that one!

However there is an issue here that is more important than money! The reason legislation cannot solve either of the painful issues that I am highlighting is that we are wrestling with something far deeper than what our laws and the courts can address. It is rightly called "sin." Anytime we fall short of God's ideal plan it causes pain. . . and this includes all of us no matter what our sexual orientation is.

I am not the judge - so if another human being opts to live life in a way that I don't believe is God's ideal - they are certainly free to do that. That is one of the great things about America. But while we are not to sit on our high horse in judgment of someone else, we are responsible to make careful well thought out choices of our own regarding moral issues.

Here is a little simple test that I like to use because I am a simple man.

While we are having a civil, calm and reasonable discussion about a very sensitive subject, would you stop and consider just one thought. If everyone in the US would file an honest tax return - would that be a good thing? Yes, of course. That would benefit all of us that love this country.

If no one would drive drunk ever again in this country - would that be a good thing? I have conducted funerals with broken hearted mothers screaming in agony at the loss of a teenage son.

If everyone would have the right kind of "self love" demonstrated by Jesus and then love their neighbor in the same way - would that be a good thing? Of course. Sounds like heaven but bring it on!

Well, what if everyone would join the LGBT community - everyone in the world, would that be a good thing? Well maybe not if you want civilization to continue on planet earth. You don't have to go to the Bible to realize that is not God's ideal plan!

The arguments for HB2 and others like it are framed in terms of the civil rights movement. That is a wonderful bandwagon to climb onto. And it is a powerful argument. If I were an attorney representing that side I would certainly try and make it. However the issue cuts both ways.

When a business owner is hooked into litigation and even forced out of business trying to defend themselves after refusing to do something that goes against their religious convictions - what about their civil rights?

Should the government even be involved in matters of morality like marriage - I don't think so. Have "civil unions" for property rights, hospital visitation, and other delicate issues, but stay out of trying to define an institution that belongs to God and not to Caesar.

Several years ago I was serving a lesbian couple looking to move to Id and wanting to buy a home here. They made at least two trips and I showed them houses. All went well for a time. I prayerfully treated them with respect and courtesy just like I think Jesus would have wanted me to do. Then one day they read something, I think it was on FB, that told them I did not personally believe in their lifestyle choice. Well that was the end of our working relationship - not because of my intolerance but theirs! I was fired and "defriended"!

Now did I go to the government and ask for redress. Try to get a law passed to force them to continue using my services even if they didn't feel comfortable any longer?

No! This is a Free country. They could move their business to someone else. Let's keep it that way for both sides of this difficult issue. And treat each other with courtesy and respect. That is why I am opposed to House Bill 2

Anti-discrimination laws do not protect all people. State and city laws that include the words "sexual orientation and gender identity" do not provide equal protection under the law; they provide special protection under the law. Special protection is not equal protection. With anti-discrimination laws, someone will ultimately be discriminated against. Please vote against this bill - please find a better way.

Thank you, Marie Starrs

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Ms. Chairman, Representatives ~

My name is Grace Sterling, I am nineteen years old and I am opposed to house bill 2.

I am no politician, but I believe this law will have far reaching ramifications that no one can fully tell of - but we can certainly guess.

Infringement on religious freedom is only one concern because any pastor who speaks against homosexuality - whether it be in anger or not (and I hope not) - can be cited as "haters" or "bigots" and called out on "discrimination".

For businesses I believe it will be detrimental.

Again, I believe it goes back to religious freedoms.

As a Christian, would I be able to say no - because of my convictions - to a homosexual working in my business? Wouldn't I be afraid of being sued because of 'discrimination'? As one who actually hopes to run a shop ~~business~~ of my own, would I not be afraid of legal actions for not hiring or perhaps facilitating a homosexual(s)?

I will be frank - I do not hate homosexuals.

I do not fear them. Some of the nicest and creative people I have met have been homosexual.

Being homosexual is their God-given free-will choice.

But, that being said, I allow that it should be my choice to say no - in any scenario - not out of anger or fear, but because I must live by my convictions.

I agree that poor and/or abusive treatment of homosexuals simply because they're 'gay' or 'lesbian' is wrong - but law or no law, it will happen. Just as with anti-gun laws, there will still be people who take and use guns for ill purposes.

Passing a law does not give people a conscience.  
As for the few cases cited - the bakers, photographers,  
printers and minister - they are few but they are,  
inevitably, the logical outcome of such a bill being  
passed.

I believe - although be referenced enough times to  
give it a grain-worthy ring - the bathroom concerns  
are very real. As an older sister with several little  
siblings, I do not wish to worry about them  
going to the restroom and being accosted or leered  
at in any way, not because I fear trans or  
homosexual people, but the predators who will  
use HR2 to that effect. Do I think there will  
suddenly be lines of men/women lining up  
outside of restrooms to do such things to  
the opposite sex of children or adults? No, but  
it opens the door and I'd rather not make it  
easy for such people.

But how would we know? We would not be able  
to 'discriminate.'

Although somewhat cliché sounding after several  
testimonies, it is indeed a slippery slope, and one  
I hope Idaho does not fall down upon - even  
out of good intentions.

Thank you -

Grace Sterling

Grace Sterling  
(208) 999-2607

Dear House State Affairs Committee Member,

Regarding written testimony on HB 2:

I am extremely concerned about the consequences of passing a law such as HB 2. Perhaps most alarming is the way in which it would violate freedom of religion by forcing citizens to engage in behavior they believe to be morally wrong. How can it be defensible to allow a very small minority (only 3-5%) to force the majority to violate their sincerely held beliefs? Please do not take away the right of Idaho citizens to practice their religion as they see fit.

State government should not attempt to tell business owners who they must hire, or who they must serve. State government should not criminalize religious belief or speech because "somebody" might be offended. State government should not force women and children to share restroom facilities with men no matter what they claim their "gender" to be. State government should not pass and enforce laws that give special "rights" to some at the expense of others.

Please also consider that the "sexual orientation" of homosexual, trans- and bi-sexuals is in a constant state of change. Where will their demands end? How do you hit a moving target?

Please represent the vast majority of Idahoans and VOTE NO on HB 2.

Thank you for serving the people of Idaho'

Sincerely,  
Halli Stone  
305 Eastview Dr.  
Idaho Falls, ID 83401  
208-524-4942

I cannot be at the hearing due to my work schedule. However, I am writing to encourage you to forward the bill to add the words "sexual orientation, gender identity" to the Idaho Human Rights Act. We need to include ALL Idahoans to the law that protects against discrimination in public accommodations. This is a matter of basic justice. It is not about religious freedom. Religious organizations already have protections under the law. However, when religious people operate in the public sphere, they cannot impose their beliefs on others. Just imagine if the tables were turned, and a Christian baker refused to bake a cake for a divorced person who was remarrying. We would think this was discriminatory. Our public sphere must protect everyone. I recently saw the movie Selma and it reminded me how recently we thought it was OK to discriminate against black people in this country. Step by step we must expand justice to all. Gay, lesbian and transgender people live in all areas of Idaho and I want them all to feel safe.

~~~~~  
Marlene F. Strong  
1619 N. 5th St.  
Boise, ID 83702  
[mfstrong@mac.com](mailto:mfstrong@mac.com)

Dear Chairman Loertscher and State Affairs Committee Members:

Thank you so much for having three days of hearings on this important bill. I ask each of you to vote as the majority of Idahoans believe:

That ALL people in Idaho deserve to be free of discrimination. This bill asks that , No More No Less.... Religious freedom will still be intact as it should be.

Sincerely--- and with hope and optimism this can pass and the Legislature can move on to the rest of your important work.

Sincerely, Jeannie and Will Swenson  
7209 El Caballo Drive  
Boise, Idaho 83704  
208-323-0141



Dear House Committee,

I am writing in support of House Bill 2 which would add the words "sexual orientation" and "gender identity" to Idaho's existing Human Rights Act.

It is time for Idaho's constitution to reflect what most of us already believe, no one should be fired simply because of their sexual orientation.

Let's make Idaho a safe place for everyone; a place where bright, diverse workers and employers want to come to thrive and succeed.

Thank you,

Vicky Swerdloff

Community Volunteer

Vicky Swerdloff

Cell: 841-3303

Home: 345-5155

Dear Representative:

**PLEASE VOTE NO on HB2.**

I feel that supporting this bill is a trap that will ultimately trample on our constitutional freedoms.

The implications of passing this law *extend far beyond its so-called intentions*. The chicanery is that we are indoctrinated into believing that by voting yes and supporting such a law demonstrates our benevolence, and we are convinced that we are being "compassionate." But, this is the trickery, the ruse. By our enthusiasm in *supposedly* shoring up compassion in our great State of Idaho, we miss the *real intent and design* of an *inherently evil law* -- which is to trample on and desecrate our priceless freedoms of speech, of religion, and of our right to live our lives according to the dictates of our own conscience. But this is how it's been done. We are now reaping the rewards of decades of duplicity ... slowly, slyly, and secretly ... leaving no one the wiser ... until it's too late.

Thank you for your consideration.

Mary Kay Tall  
1655 Coronado  
Idaho Falls, ID 83404

Vote NO! on HB2/SOGI

Don't you just love listening to the gender confused crowd trying to convince the world that disagreeing with them on SOGI amounts to a hate crime? The idea that Idaho stands out for not having EXTRA special protections for the gender confused is part of what I love about being here. What about a law that gives anti-discrimination protection to **everyone**? Are my rights any greater or less than those of anyone else? Attempting to bring this IMAGINARY issue, with IMAGINARY DISCRIMINATION, to the level of real discrimination such as women's rights, race related civil rights issue and real hate crimes is an absolute travesty. There is no problem here, other in the minds of the already confused. You should listen fairly, drop this where it belongs and move on. I am sure this crowd will be back next year with increasing passion and decreasing values based on duplicity. Don't let them wear you down. Hang in there for what you know to be right.

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Roger H. Tall, M.D.

I wish to encourage the members of the State Affairs committee to vote in favor of "adding the words" legislation to increase human rights protections.

Grant M Thomas 933 Bryan Rd. Pocatello, ID.

## Vote YES on HB 2

Dear State Affairs Committee Members,

I urge you to vote in support of House Bill 2. Amending the Human Rights Act will protect individuals from being fired, evicted or denied services for being gay or transgender. As with other civil rights such as race or creed, the Human Rights Act protects individuals from systemic discrimination causing serious problems in our communities. The Human Rights Act protects businesses from unfair accusations by implementing a fair and neutral process to investigate the legitimacy of discrimination claims. It also protects religious organizations from by exempting them from the law. Religious beliefs are important, and this legislation does not impact the ability of a religion to practice their spiritual beliefs. The Human Rights Act creates an ideal balance between the rights of religious organizations and individuals while protecting businesses from unjustified accusations. I ask you to support HB2, because it will improve Idaho and help our state move forward. All Idahoans deserve equal treatment under our laws.

Sincerely,

Jean Terra

P. O. Box 124

Ketchum, Idaho 83340


[terracomm31@clearwire.net](mailto:terracomm31@clearwire.net)

I would like to urge all of you to OPPOSE SB2. Thank you and especially for your representing us.

Judy Twede  
1392 Newton Circle  
Idaho Falls, Id 83401

Thank you for taking the time to consider my email. I would like to encourage you and other members of the legislature to push through the Add the Words bill. I am a married, heterosexual, mother, who typically votes conservatively (not that any of that should really matter) but this issue is appalling to me. How is it that a basic human right of not being discriminated against is something that has to be argued over simply on the basis of certain ideologies. Please add the words sexual orientation and gender identity!

Thank you for your consideration,  
Jennifer VanCour  
5854 S Olearia Pl  
Boise, ID 83716  
208-850-0424

 JUNO Message Center

From: Melissa Ward <mward@ci.sandpoint.id.us>

To: [REDACTED]

Sent: Fri, Feb 07, 2014 11:37 AM

Subject: RE: record request

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February 7, 2014

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
Ms. [REDACTED]

In response to your record request received yesterday, the City's anti-discrimination ordinance was adopted on December 21, 2011. The City Clerk reports that the City has received one complaint, in 2012, regarding employment. The original complaint was not signed and was not verified by the complainant. The City requested that the complainant verify the complaint, but the time to remedy the issue expired, and the complaint was rejected by the City.

The City Attorney has reviewed your request and this response. Please note that, pursuant to Idaho Code § 9-343, if you believe you have been aggrieved by the denial of a request for disclosure, your sole remedy is to institute proceedings in the district court of the county where the records or some part thereof are located in order to compel the public agency to make the information you have requested available for public inspection in accordance with the provisions of Idaho Code §§ 9-337 through 9-348. Your petition contesting the public agency's decision must be filed within one hundred eighty (180) calendar days from the date of mailing of the notice of denial or partial denial by the public agency.

Will you reply, please, and confirm receipt of this message?

Thank you.

Melissa Ward  
Deputy City Clerk  
City of Sandpoint  
1123 Lake St., Sandpoint, Idaho 83864  
(208) 263-3317  
email: [clerksoffice@ci.sandpoint.id.us](mailto:clerksoffice@ci.sandpoint.id.us)  
City website: [www.cityofsandpoint.com](http://www.cityofsandpoint.com)

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From: [REDACTED]  
Sent: Thursday, February 06, 2014 10:53 AM  
To: Melissa Ward  
Subject: record request



## TESTIMONY IN AFFIRMATION OF HOUSE BILL NO. 2

JOSHUA WATKINS

Chairman, committee members, thank you for granting me the opportunity to speak today, and to all those who have testified and attended this hearing, thank you for your civic engagement.

Listening to various testimonies from this morning, I find myself troubled by the arguments, and more importantly, the contradictions that arise from those opposing the bill. To the several who spoke of the imposition this bill would have on religious freedom, and the right that Americans have to deny service based on their fundamental religious beliefs, I ask: Do you deny service based on other acts or identifications you label as sin? If an individual walked into your store and disclosed they had engaged in premarital sex, would you refuse to provide flowers for their wedding or print their T-shirt? Many religions, including my own, teach the doctrine that all sin is equal in the eyes of God. Why, then, would you diverge from your religious beliefs to make a distinction based on sexual orientation? One man's testimony separated sexual orientation and gender identity from race, creed, and religion because he believes they are a choice. I personally disagree, but committee members, even if you do not buy into that argument, recognize that religion is a choice as well.

Several testimonies have spoken of the danger of such ordinances allowing males into female locker rooms with disregard, or other similar disturbing images. First, to blatantly use such horrifying hypotheticals is nothing more than a gross misuse of pathos in order to pin you all as legislators into a corner. But also consider this: these testimonies include hypothetical situations. We have city ordinances, not from other states, but in Idaho itself, that have been in effect long enough to view possible ramifications. To my knowledge, none of these scenarios have occurred. When evaluating the testimony you hear on this bill, committee, it is imperative that you give more weight to the empirical evidence available to you than the cheap grabs at instilling fear that others have provided.

Committee members, I am angry. I am angry that lobbyists have flown in from DC and spoke with false authority on the harmful nature of this bill, when they have not viewed or experienced the political and cultural landscape of Idaho first-hand. I am angry that women have stood before you today, advocating you do not pass this bill, without acknowledging that the right to vote, or the destigmatization of working outside the home, even the liberty of owning their own checking account would not be possible without addressing and combating discriminatory laws and institutions that once did not view females as equal to males. I am angry that Idaho is at a crossroads, and that this issue is being used to further polarize our citizens. I am angry that two years ago, a former high school student was prohibited from delivering a speech on the origins of homosexuality, and that a public educational institution willingly restricted her right to free speech. Most of all, I am angry at myself for not fighting against that decision, for not disclosing my own sexual orientation, because I was afraid I would lose a job I loved.

Earlier, one testifier stated that we cannot legislate kindness. In some sense, he is correct--I can't, and don't, expect the government to change how people perceive me. I don't expect the government to mandate that I should be respected for who I am, rather than be disrespected for whom I choose to love. What I do expect is that this committee understand that this is not an issue of legislating kindness. This is an issue of legislating equality.

**RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF HUMAN RESOURCES  
ASSOCIATION OF TREASURE VALLEY**

Whereas the Human Resources Association of Treasure Valley (HRATV) is an Idaho non-profit organization and an affiliate chapter of the Society for Human Resources Management (SHRM).

Whereas HRATV's stated mission is to promote excellence and community engagement through the development of human resource professionals.

Whereas HRATV presently consists of more than 400 individuals who are involved in human resources for a number of businesses and state, county, and municipal agencies with operations in the Treasure Valley.

Whereas HRATV believes that it is in the best interest of the business community of the State of Idaho to amend the Idaho Human Rights Act and add "sexual orientation" as a protected class.

NOW THEREFORE, consistent with the motion that was made, seconded, and approved at the HRATV's board of director meeting held on October 8, 2014, HRATV recommends that the Idaho Human Rights Act (IHRA), or more specifically the first sentence of Idaho Code § 67-5909, be amended by adding the words "sexual orientation," so that it shall become unlawful to discriminate against a person because of, or on a basis of sexual orientation, in any of the subsections set forth in 67-5909.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned officers and directors of HRATV have executed this Resolution on the date indicated below in their capacity as officers and directors of HRATV.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Kandy Weaver, SPHR  
Its: President and Director

Date: 12/22/14

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Kay Walter, PHR  
Its: Secretary and Director

Date: 12/24/14

By Stella Weaver

I wasn't planning to speak at this hearing, but I've been inspired by some of the heroes sitting in this room and I want to show my support of adding "sexual orientation" and "gender identity" to the Idaho Human Rights Act. I'm a fourth-generation Idahoan who grew up in Mtn. Home and I'm honored to hear this discussion happening in my home state.

In 2000, I began working for a company here in Boise. Shortly after my arrival, a memo circulated that we may see people that appear to be of different genders in the bathrooms and we were not to be alarmed. Of course, people were alarmed. I was one of them. People from both sides complained, meetings were held, and declarations were made, but the employer stayed their course and the bathrooms were opened for people to use as they saw appropriate.

In the end, it was much ado about nothing. There was never a single issue and nobody was harmed during their bathroom usage. In fact, people benefitted because they were able to be authentic at their workplace. The company still holds the same policy today and has employed thousands of people who are all safely using their bathrooms. For me, raised by a family of conservative ranchers in this great state – it was a valuable learning experience about how simple it is to cultivate a bit of humanity among friends and coworkers.

As you know, many cities in Idaho have already passed this legislation. Since passage of these laws in the cities, they have largely yielded the same results that I saw in my workplace so many years ago. I do not believe there have been widespread instances of communities suffering or having their well-being adversely affected as a result. No peeping Toms in bathrooms, no rampant assaults or any of the other scenarios that were used to justify opposing anti-discrimination laws. The fears have been unsubstantiated.

But, there have been accounts of GLBT people being fired from their jobs, becoming victims of bullying and hate crimes, experiencing higher instances of depression/suicide, facing housing discrimination, etc. It's tragic to see somebody getting ostracized from their church, family, and community because of who they are. Who am I (or anybody else) to say that somebody should be discriminated against for openly for living their life?

I'm also a social worker who has seen the effects of open discrimination. It's been humbling to talk to gay teens living on the streets, to work with a transgendered woman with two black eyes too discouraged to call the police, to watch a lesbian couple of thirty years almost lose their home after a job loss because one of them was outed, and to hear from the straight woman who was sexually assaulted because a man thought she was a lesbian. While I know there are already laws in place to protect people from crime, fear and stigma are powerful deterrents. In the case of the young woman who was assaulted, she didn't want her boyfriend to find out somebody thought she lesbian – so she declined to take action. People suffer when discrimination is institutionalized.

In my time growing up in Idaho and my time working in social justice, I've seen these experiences with my friends and people that I've worked with. People (and communities) have suffered tremendously as a result and it's a tragedy.

While adding the words will not fix everything, it's a step in the right direction. Please thoughtfully consider voting yes on HB2. Thank you for your consideration.

Thank you for having this hearing on an issue that has been of concern to some Idahoans for several years. It is important for elected officials to give heed to concerns raised even by small groups within the total population they serve.

Numerous years ago when the issue of adding the words "sexual orientation and gender identity" was initiated, the attitude of the general population was much different than it is today, and the current request may result more from an historically felt need than a present day reality.

I would therefore ask this committee to consider only those verifiable events which have occurred in Idaho in the last couple years when determining the need for House Bill 02. Should you come to the conclusion that such an addition to existing law is necessary, I ask that you <sup>also</sup> consider the religious freedoms rights of a minority of other Idahoans who will also be affected by this legislation.

For those who believe same gender sex has been forbidden by God, provision needs to be made so that they are not forced to accept the moral wrong into their home should they decide to rent a portion of it to others whether long term as in the case of a basement apartment in a private home, or short term as in the case of rooms in a

Bed & Breakfast where the owners and guests share some rooms in common.

A second provision needs to be in place that would prevent people from being forced under this law to participate through various services such as photography, food preparation, or entertainment in events celebrating same gender sex such as weddings, anniversaries, or gay pride gatherings.

Although these two groups differ in belief and lifestyle, I believe Idaho is large enough and its people noble enough to accept and accommodate the differences. The two groups themselves can hardly expect to be able to live according to its own unique standards and not grant the same "privilege" to the other group.

Thank you

Dorey Vandell

~Mt Home, Idaho