

PUBLIC PROTEST STOPS CALIFORNIAN BILL AB2943



On the website of “Mass Resistance”, a Massachusetts based pro-family organization, we read,



On the last day of the session, California State Assembly member Evan Low, sponsor of bill AB 2943, capitulated to pressure and pulled the bill from the floor. Low is considered the most aggressive member of the California LGBT Legislative caucus. *Absolutely everyone said that Bill AB 2943 bill was impossible to stop in the California Legislature.* It was the crown jewel of the powerful LGBT lobby. Democrats supported it and Republicans were afraid to touch it. Tens of thousands of Christians contacted the legislators by phone and by email, creating an unexpected wave of resistance.

Bill AB 2943 would have banned all therapy or counseling for sexual orientation or “gender identity” issues, even promotion or descriptions of it. Legal groups said this would include Bible verses.



The bill would make it an “*unlawful business practice to engage in any transaction intended to result or that results in the sale or lease of goods or services to any consumer that advertise, offer to engage in, or do engage in sexual orientation change efforts with an individual.*” All these things would constitute an economic delict.

The bill flew through the State Assembly last spring. On August 16 it breezed through the Senate. But because the Senate added an amendment, it had to go through another Assembly vote. That seemed like a slam dunk.

There were then only 14 more days in the legislative session ending August 31 – little time to organize in the 80-member Assembly. Major pro-family groups in California were so sure it would pass that they told their supporters to start calling the Governor's office to get him to veto it.

It is not just the pro-family group Mass Resistance that is responsible. Tens of thousands of Californians made this happen. Many churches, pastors, and religious organizations united and got Christians to call or email their legislators. Many legislators said they got a thousand or thousands of calls and emails in opposition. One estimate is that over 40,000 calls and emails were sent. The legislators appear to fear their constituents more than they fear their party. A news reporter for a national news agency said she had not seen anything like this in the 13 years she has been at the state capitol.

Last month a similar bill in the Massachusetts Legislature was stopped, a furious fight which also went to the final day of the session.

According to Mass Resistance, California is huge and a considerable challenge. Using various methods, including analyzing the districts, the upcoming elections, and watching the interaction on the Assembly floor, activists identified about 20 assembly members who were most likely to waver – one way or the other. They focused on those. As time went on, that group grew to 24 as legislators' fear began to show.

Arthur Schaper, director of Californian Mass Resistance, organized visits to lawmakers' district offices, frequent phone calls by constituents, and lots of emailing. A handout for legislators was produced, explaining the bill's huge problems, and talking points for citizens. Most legislators had never heard the truth about the bill, mostly just the LGBT propaganda.

The activists worked with over 40 churches in key districts, including that of assemblyman Evan Low, the sponsor of the bill. Many of these churches had not been aware of bill AB 2943, and were very upset and became energized once they were informed.

Meetings with high level staffers connected to key legislators, were arranged. Schaper and Brian Camenker spoke with the LGBT Democratic caucus director the week before the end of the legislative session. The legal challenges they would face because this legislation were discussed, as the bill is clearly unconstitutional. Lies being told by the LGBT lobby about reparative therapy were exposed.

As a result, day by day the support for the bill began to diminish, especially among Democrats in swing districts. A lot of members were getting jittery about this. Every day at the end of August the bill was on the Assembly's daily schedule to be voted on. And each day it was skipped over once the day's session started.

At approximately 10 a.m. on Friday, August 31, the bill's sponsor, assembly member Evan Low, released a statement which the LA Times subsequently also emailed to us. He was officially pulling the bill. Low says he will try again next year with a modified bill. (Here is the California MassResistance press release.)

On the Mass Resistance website, we read,:

It's likely that the legislators had never experienced this kind of full-court press from pro-family conservatives. We've learned that's what it takes to prevail.

Even in the bluest, most aggressively left-wing state in the country, we can win if we are willing to fight, and be tireless and unrelenting. And it's important to employ effective strategies. Too many pro-family conservatives simply want to do what they're comfortable doing — and that almost always fails.

Not giving up is extremely important. As we mentioned, virtually every California pro-family group had basically conceded that this would pass (though some kept a minor email effort going). If we had relented even a day or so sooner, this bill would have passed and become law.

It's necessary to understand that this isn't just simply Republicans versus Democrats, but, as Arthur says, "raw political action." There are a lot of nuances and other factors involved that should be taken into account.

Finally, just because a legislator votes for something once or even twice, it doesn't mean he can't be persuaded to vote against it. It just takes the right kinds of pressure. As the late US Senator Everett Dirksen famously said, "When I feel the heat, I see the light."

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