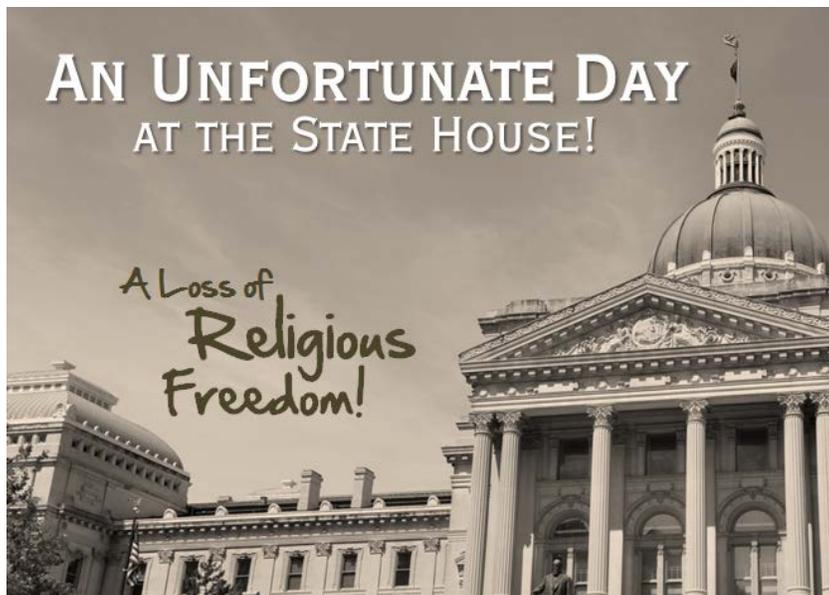




Last **Thursday, April 2nd** will be remembered as the day when **religious freedom suffered a major loss** at the Indiana State House.

Religious Freedom **lost** when the Indiana House of Representatives and the Indiana State Senate passed Senate Bill 50 and Governor Mike Pence signed it into law.

Since last Thursday I have been contacted by people around the state regarding **what happened** to bring about the passage of Senate Bill 50 that resulted in a loss of religious freedom.



Senate Bill 101 Protected Religious Freedom!

Senate Bill 50 was a **response** to Senate Bill 101 which passed earlier in the legislative session.

Senate Bill 101 is the **Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA)**. It is **similar** to laws in **30 other states** and to the **Federal RFRA**.

SB 101 is **not** about discrimination! SB 101 is about **protecting religious freedom** by providing a **guideline** for **courts** to use when the **government** would try to **force** an individual, a business or an organization to do something that would **violate** a sincerely held religious belief.

Ryan Anderson is with the **Heritage Foundation**. Here is how he **explains** RFRA laws in general and the Indiana law, SB 101:

“The Indiana law is based on the 1993 federal Religious Freedom Restoration Act – a law that has served the America people well for more than 20 years. Passed with 97 votes in the Senate and by unanimous voice vote in the House, the federal Religious Freedom Restoration Act was signed into law by then-President Bill Clinton. This federal law prohibits substantial government burdens on religious exercise unless the government can show a compelling interest in burdening religious liberty and does so through the least restrictive means.

These protections for religious freedom, like the one passed in Indiana, provide a commonsense way to balance the fundamental right to religious liberty with compelling government interests. The federal Religious Freedom Restoration Act protects against federal government violations of religious liberty, and the state Religious Freedom Restoration Acts protect against state violations.”

[\(Click Here\)](#) to read the rest of Ryan Anderson's article about Indiana's RFRA.



Indiana Protects Religious Liberty. Why That's Good Policy.

Ryan T. Anderson / Sarah Torre / March 26, 2015

In a victory for religious freedom, earlier today Gov. Mike Pence, R-Ind., signed into law the state's Religious Freedom Restoration Act. This is good policy that protects the fundamental freedom of Indiana citizens from unnecessary and unreasonable government coercion.

The Indiana law is based on the 1993 federal Religious Freedom Restoration Act—a law that has served the American people well for more than 20 years. Passed with 97 votes in the Senate and by unanimous voice vote in the House, the federal Religious Freedom Restoration Act was signed into law by then-President Bill Clinton. This federal law prohibits substantial government burdens on religious exercise unless the government can show a compelling interest in burdening religious liberty and does so through the least restrictive means.

These protections for religious freedom, like the one passed in Indiana, provide a commonsense way to balance the fundamental right to religious liberty with compelling government interests. The federal Religious Freedom Restoration Act protects against federal government violations of religious liberty, and state Religious Freedom Restoration Acts protect against state violations.

By passing its Religious Freedom Restoration Act, Indiana joins the 19 other states that have implemented such laws. Eleven additional states have religious liberty protections that state courts have interpreted to provide a similar level of protection. These commonsense laws place the onus on the government to justify its actions in burdening the free exercise of religion.

Then Senate Bill 50 Was Passed!

Senate Bill 50 **removed most** of the religious freedom **protection** found in SB 101. This means that Indiana's RFRA would **not** be available to **help protect** the **religious** (Christian, Orthodox Jewish person, etc.) baker, florist or photographer from **being forced** by the government to **participate** in a **homosexual wedding**.

To **take away** this **protection** from **religious** individuals and businesses was **wrong!**

Why Did This Happen?

Be watching for an **upcoming email** where I will discuss **why** religious freedom was **lost** at the State House on **April 2nd**. It **didn't** have to happen!

Make a **tax deductible contribution** to help in the battle to **protect** families, **protect** churches and **defend** traditional values!

CLICK HERE TO CONTRIBUTE

Contributions to Advance America are tax deductible for income tax purposes.



2015 LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

[\(Click Here\)](#) to view a **Legislative Update** on the 2015 General Assembly. Go to our website often to get **updates** on legislation impacting your family and your church.

Advance America will continue to lead the effort at the State House to **protect** churches and families! This will be our **35th Legislative Session** serving as your eyes and ears at the State House!

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