



March 22, 18

Assembly Member Blanca E. Rubio,
Chair of Human Services Committee
Assembly of Human Services Committee
1020 N Street, Room 124
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Opposition to AB 2119

Dear Assembly Member Rubio:

On behalf of Bethel Church, we are writing to you to lodge opposition to AB 2119. We are a church with a congregation of just under 10,000 regular church attendees and over 650 church staff located in Redding, California. Additionally, we have an online streaming congregation of over 25,000.

As a faith-based organization, we have significant concerns about the spiritual, ethical, and moral ideology that forms the basis of this bill; these ideological concerns deserve exploration in another forum. For the sake of this letter, we will communicate as a constituency about the problematic ramifications of AB 2119.

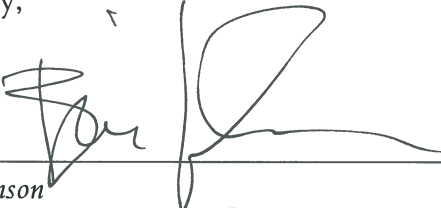
We believe this proposed law to be dangerous, irresponsible, and poorly communicated to the California constituency. Our objections to AB 2119 are threefold: First, we believe that foster parents and social workers have the legal and moral responsibility to care for the underage foster children under their charge and to make healthy, long-term decisions for them until they are of legal age. The proposed AB 2119 undermines the legal guardians' core responsibility to oversee the health and wellbeing for one's children. Second, AB 2119 empowers children to make life-altering decisions without counseling or therapy. Life-impacting decisions should not be made based on emotions that may be unhealthily influenced by peer pressure, circumstance, history, or passing experiences. This legislation specifically prohibits any kind of treatment aimed at "aligning a child's or nonminor dependent's assigned sex at birth and gender identity." This prohibition creates an environment where a child or nonminor dependent has only one option presented to them while at a vulnerable time in their lives, unable to choose from any additional options. Children under the age of 18 should not be encouraged to make decisions as life-altering as puberty blocking, cross-sex hormones, surgery and resultant sterilization. This notion is especially true concerning foster children who may have had unconventional or traumatic experiences, which could affect their ability to make informed choices. Third, gender identity "affirming" therapies for underage children potentially pose catastrophic physical, mental, and emotional health risks. These hazards include stunted sexual development, infertility, and statistically higher rates of suicide. These are alarming ramifications for the wellbeing of children and communities.

Here is an example that illustrates our concern: If an 11-year-old female desired to have breast implants, effective parenting and medical counsel would suggest that it would be beneficial to wait until she is older and more physically established before affirming her in making that kind of life-altering decision, if she so chooses. If we wouldn't permit this kind of less extreme procedure, why would we permit and even encourage more extreme medical procedures for a minor? It remains critical that parents or legal guardians maintain the right to look out for the best short-term and long-term interests of their child or nonminor dependent during physical, emotional, and psychological developmental stages.

We understand that this legislation addresses a subject with many voices and opinions, and you have many competing ideologies to consider. Our desire is not to force our ideology upon individuals, but to give individuals the right to choose the type of support they receive and to encourage caution in major life-altering decisions made by minors.

We bless you and pray for wisdom as you consider this bill, and we thank you for all that you are doing as a leader in California. We plan to inform our community of this important upcoming vote. We encourage you to vote against AB 2119. Thank you for your consideration.

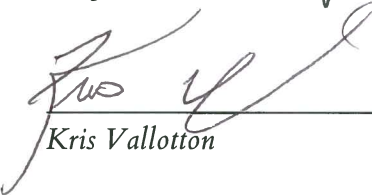
Sincerely,



Bill Johnson



Beni Johnson



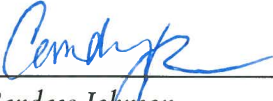
Kris Vallotton



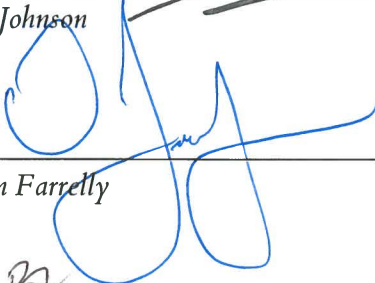
Kathy Vallotton



Eric Johnson



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