

# CALIFORNIA BILL ON HOMOSEXUALS UNWARRANTED

The Catholic League typically avoids taking a position on homosexuality, but there is one bill that is presently being considered that is of interest to the league.

A bill is pending before the California legislature that purports to prohibit discrimination against homosexuals in the public schools. But upon closer scrutiny, the bill contains measures that would directly impact on academic freedom and indirectly impact on parochial schools. The central problem with the bill is that it reaches beyond the legitimate issue of non-discrimination and has the effect of sanctioning homosexual behavior.

Under the bill, teachers would be prohibited from giving instruction that might "adversely" reflect on homosexuals. While this sounds honorable, it may also stifle teachers from discussing rational objections about lifestyle choices. Textbooks that raise such questions are specifically held to be objectionable by this bill, thus conveying the message to students that society has no interest in promoting monogamous relationships within the institution of marriage. As such, one of the most basic institutions of Western Civilization would be viewed as nothing more than a lifestyle choice.

AB 101 would also affect interscholastic athletics between public schools and faith-based schools. Hence, Jewish and Christian schools that object to homosexuality would find themselves in the position of having to modify their doctrinal prerogatives as a condition of participating in some public school activities. This is something no Catholic school could accept.

The bill would be necessary if there were ample evidence that

intolerable practices against homosexuals would be rectified with the passage of this legislation. The bill would also be persuasive if there were reason to believe that no unfair burden would be placed on academic freedom. Moreover, the bill would be reasonable if it contained no language that impacted on the discretion of private schools to foster their own vision of sexuality. But in all three cases, the bill fails to satisfy.

Therefore, it is the position of the Catholic League that AB 101 is ill-advised and should be opposed.