

March 12, 2026



The Honorable Corey Jackson

California State Assembly

1021 O Street, Suite 5160

Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Opposition to AB 1578

Dear Assemblymember Jackson,

On behalf of tens of thousands of constituents, allied organizations, and more than 2,000 churches across California, the California Family Council respectfully opposes AB 1578.

While combating genuine hatred and discrimination is a worthy goal, AB 1578 raises serious concerns about free speech, religious liberty, and the potential for ideological coercion within government.

First, the bill fails to clearly define what constitutes “hate speech.” Under AB 1578, state and local officials would be required to complete “anti-hate speech” training without a clear statutory definition of the term. This ambiguity is troubling because it leaves the meaning of “hate speech” open to interpretation by outside consultants or advocacy groups who may design and administer these training programs. Without clear limits, lawful and constitutionally protected viewpoints, especially religious or moral beliefs, could easily be mislabeled as “hate.”

Experience in other countries demonstrates how broadly such policies can expand once implemented. In Finland, Member of Parliament Päivi Räsänen [faced years of legal harassment](#) for publicly expressing her biblical beliefs about marriage and sexuality. Likewise, the European [Union’s Digital Services Act](#) pressures online platforms to suppress lawful speech under the banner of combating “hate.” These examples illustrate a troubling pattern: regulations intended to target genuine threats often expand to encompass moral disagreement, religious conviction, and dissent from prevailing cultural views.

Second, this bill risks weaponizing government training against people of faith and other ideological minorities. Public officials in California hold a wide range of deeply held religious and philosophical beliefs. Mandatory ideological training that frames certain viewpoints, particularly traditional religious beliefs about marriage, sexuality, or gender, as inherently hateful would stigmatize these individuals and undermine the pluralism that our constitutional system is designed to protect.

Finally, AB 1578 opens the door to compelled ideological instruction. The bill provides no meaningful guidance regarding who will design the training curriculum or what standards will govern it. As a result, the content will likely be shaped by outside advocacy organizations with particular political perspectives. When government requires officials to participate in training that promotes one worldview while labeling dissenting viewpoints as harmful or hateful, it creates pressure for ideological conformity rather than fostering genuine civil discourse.

Californians should be deeply concerned about any policy that empowers government authorities to label lawful viewpoints as hateful and compel individuals to undergo ideological training as a condition of public service.

For these reasons, the California Family Council respectfully opposes AB 1578. Efforts to combat hatred must never come at the expense of fundamental constitutional protections, including the freedoms of speech, conscience, and religion.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Greg Burt". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Greg Burt

Director of Capitol Engagement

California Family Council