

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Faith Leaders Come Together In Support of Prop 1



As leaders representing a diverse and robust cross section of the faith community in Anchorage, Alaska, we stand strongly together and united in support of Proposition 1 that residents will be voting on in the April 2018 Municipal Election.

This issue, that has been debated for decades in Anchorage, resurfaced in 2015 when the Anchorage Assembly passed an ordinance (AO-96) that was essentially identical to an initiative that was soundly defeated by the voters in 2012 that would have added sexual orientation and gender identity to our city's non-discrimination code. During this latest round, multiple, suggested amendments were put forward to protect rights of conscience, privacy and safety but every one was summarily rejected by the Assembly. The only alternative left to correct this injustice was an initiative to amend AO-96. That initiative, presented as a petition and signed by thousands of Anchorage residents, is now called **Proposition 1**.

Proposition 1 does two simple things -

- 1) *Requires Municipal-owned facilities like the Sullivan Arena and public libraries to segregate their bathrooms, showers, changing facilities & locker rooms based on biological sex as determined at birth and,*
- 2) *Gives private businesses and faith-based groups such as churches, ministries, adoption agencies, and schools the freedom to operate according to their convictions and segregate their intimate spaces based on biological sex as determined at birth.*

It is highly reasonable for women and girls in vulnerable, private settings to not have to be at various stages of undress with biological males. This is basic, common sense. It should be noted that Prop 1 was not drafted as a means to stop an imagined groundswell of transgender sexual predators but as a means to prevent would-be predators from using the concept of "gender identity" as cover. In addition, regardless of possible harmful intentions posed by men identifying as women, women and girls in intimate spaces should expect to not have to be in close quarters with biological males.

Social, cultural, legal and political chaos ensue when an ordinance creates and elevates a protected class based on a fluid state of mind such as "gender identity" giving it legally equal weight alongside immutable characteristics such as race. Equal rights and equal protection of all citizens must be reflected in our laws. Legally allowing males who simply declare themselves to be female full, unhindered access to female restrooms, showers, locker rooms and changing facilities puts women and children at risk of voyeurism, loss of privacy and dignity and worse.

The basic assumption behind Prop1 is that Government should protect the privacy, safety and dignity of all Alaskans in intimate settings like showers, restrooms and locker rooms - not threaten it. Sex-segregated personal facilities exist because there are very particular ways in which men and women remain different, and always will be different.

We affirm that every individual is created in the image of God and as such should be treated with love, compassion, and respect. We also affirm that people are created male and female, that this complementarity is the basis for the family centered on the marital union of a man and a woman, and that the family is the wellspring of human flourishing.

We affirm that self-conception as male or female should be defined by God's holy purposes in creation and redemption as revealed in Scripture. We also affirm that men and women have different experiences in restrooms, locker rooms, and other sex-segregated places because of the differences in their anatomy. Separating the sexes in these facilities allows for distinct physical accommodations proper to the needs of men and women.

As the pastoral leaders of churches of various denominations, ministerial alliances and associations, the signatures below collectively represent thousands of Anchorage residents of every color, economic status and geographic region of our great community. We stand united in telling our neighbors the truth about Christian anthropology and in defending our families and children from the falsehoods propagated and bad policies implemented in the name of equality and tolerance that threaten the privacy and dignity of our fellow citizens.