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May 22, 2017

University Democrats Statement on HB 3859's Passage

Austin, Texas - University Democrats would like to express its disappointment concerning the passage of HB 3859, known to some as the “Freedom to Serve Children Act.” HB 3859 is a piece of legislation that allows child welfare providers to discriminate against particular groups on the basis of their “sincerely held religious beliefs.”

HB 3859's passage would grant child welfare providers the authority to reject parental candidates due to the individual's religious affiliation, sexual orientation, race or ethnicity. It is just one in a long line of legislative measures designed to discriminate against particular groups of people. The following are instances which would be regarded as lawful under the bill.

- A Muslim woman being denied adoption of a child based on their her religious ideology.
- An LGBTQ couple being rejected as a prospective family due to their sexual orientation.
- A child's lesbian aunt being denied adoption rights due their sexual orientation.
- A transgender child seeking counseling being denied access due to their adoption agency's “sincerely held religious beliefs.”

In an increasingly cohesive and connected world, bills like these only work to drive a wedge between individuals and do a disservice to our state's neediest population. This legislative session has seen too many measures aimed at discriminating against our states' LGBTQ population.

HB 3859 could result in hundreds of children being denied the chance to be embraced by a warm and loving family merely because the agency in question disagrees with the way in which the members of that family live their lives. University Democrats extends its thanks to all of our allies in the Texas Senate and House of Representatives that fought in opposition of this bill,