

By: Sanford

H.B. No. 2876

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the rights of wedding industry professionals and their employees in connection with the provision of goods, services, and facilities that would violate a sincerely held religious belief.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. This Act shall be known as the Professional Right of Conscience for Wedding Ceremonies Act.

SECTION 2. Title 99, Business & Commerce Code, is amended by adding Chapter 2005 to read as follows:

CHAPTER 2005. FREEDOM OF RELIGION FOR WEDDING INDUSTRY

PROFESSIONALS

Sec. 2005.001. RIGHTS OF CERTAIN WEDDING INDUSTRY

PROFESSIONALS AND THEIR EMPLOYEES. (a) In this section:

(1) "Person" means an individual or a private legal entity, including a corporation, association, or partnership.

(2) "Wedding industry professional" means a person who offers for sale or rent or sells or rents goods, services, accommodations, or facilities for a purpose related to the solemnization, formation, or celebration of any marriage. The term includes a wedding planner, baker, caterer, photographer, videographer, disc jockey, decorator, and wedding venue owner or operator.

(b) A wedding industry professional or an individual employed by a wedding industry professional while acting in the

1 scope of that employment may not be required to sell, rent, or  
2 otherwise provide goods, services, accommodations, or facilities  
3 for a purpose related to the solemnization, formation, or  
4 celebration of any marriage if the action would cause the wedding  
5 industry professional or employee to violate a sincerely held  
6 religious belief.

7 Sec. 2005.002. DISCRIMINATION PROHIBITED. A refusal to  
8 provide goods, services, accommodations, or facilities under  
9 Section 2005.001 is not the basis for a civil or criminal cause of  
10 action or any other action by this state or a political subdivision  
11 of this state to penalize or withhold benefits or privileges,  
12 including any tax exemptions or governmental contracts, grants, or  
13 licenses, from any protected wedding industry professional or  
14 employee.

15 Sec. 2005.003. PROTECTION UNDER OTHER LAW. To the extent  
16 that a wedding industry professional or employee is entitled to  
17 protection under this chapter and Subchapter G, Chapter 2, Family  
18 Code, the prevailing provision is the provision that provides the  
19 greater protection for the wedding industry professional or  
20 employee.

21 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives  
22 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as  
23 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this  
24 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this  
25 Act takes effect September 1, 2017.