

By: Geren, Bonnen of Brazoria

H.B. No. 3956

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

1
2 relating to a privilege from disclosure to governmental units for
3 certain evidence concerning sermons delivered by a religious
4 leader.

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

6 SECTION 1. Title 6, Civil Practice and Remedies Code, is
7 amended by adding Chapter 150A to read as follows:

8 CHAPTER 150A. DISCOVERY BY GOVERNMENTAL UNIT

9 Sec. 150A.001. DEFINITIONS. In this chapter:

10 (1) "Governmental unit" has the meaning assigned by
11 Section 101.001.

12 (2) "Religious organization" means an organization
13 that qualifies as a religious organization under Section 11.20, Tax
14 Code.

15 (3) "Religious worship" has the meaning assigned by
16 Section 11.20, Tax Code.

17 Sec. 150A.002. SERMONS PRIVILEGED FROM DISCLOSURE TO
18 GOVERNMENTAL UNIT. A governmental unit may not, in any civil action
19 or other civil or administrative proceeding to which the
20 governmental unit is a party, compel the production or disclosure
21 of a written copy or audio or video recording of a sermon delivered
22 by a religious leader during religious worship of a religious
23 organization or compel the religious leader to testify regarding
24 the sermon.

1 SECTION 2. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
2 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
3 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
4 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
5 Act takes effect September 1, 2017.