

By: Geren

H.B. No. 3956

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

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

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

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

CHAPTER 150A. DISCOVERY BY GOVERNMENTAL UNIT

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

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

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

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

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