

# Press Release

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OLYMPIA—The Faith and Freedom Network Chairman Joe Fuiten today released copies of a newspaper advertisement running in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Legislative District critical of HB 2661. The ads urge readers to call “Sen. Rasmussen and ask her to vote NO on HB 2661”. HB 2661 would amend Washington’s civil rights legislation to include “sexual orientation” in the act.

Washington already has harsher penalties for hate crimes, including crimes motivated by homophobia. These laws were widely supported by the Christian community. “Unfortunately this law is different, and we must oppose it. In other state’s it’s been a tool to harass Churches, Christian charities and groups like the Boy Scouts” said FFN Chairman Pastor Joe Fuiten.

No significant problem with discrimination currently exists. “I’ve asked advocates of this bill to show me pervasive evidence of discrimination and they haven’t been able to,” said Fuiten.

The cost of complying with the law may be significant, and ordinary people who are landlords, serve on Non-profit boards, or own small businesses will be put at risk for a claim of discrimination. In other states the ACLU announced they would represent claimants who chose to file discrimination claims under similar laws.

“Guaranteeing sexual minorities access to housing and employment is a reasonable goal, but the lesson of other states is that these bills aren’t about

equality. They are about normalizing homosexual behavior and providing a weapon for anti-Christian bigots to harass Christians,” said Fuiten.

The initial run of ads are in the Nisqually Valley News and the Eatonville Dispatch starting on Tuesday, January 24, 2006.