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ACLU of Kansas Denounces Legislature's Passage of SB 284

OVERLAND PARK, KS --- In response to the Legislature's passage of SB 284, a bill allowing adoption agencies contracting with the state to discriminate against LGBT people—and virtually anyone else—on claims of religious freedom, Micah Kubic, executive director of the ACLU of Kansas, made the following statement:

“Today marks a truly shameful day for the Free State. SB 284 is a blatantly discriminatory bill that, if signed into law by Governor Colyer, will have devastating consequences for Kansas families, businesses, and—most importantly—vulnerable children.

The child welfare system in Kansas is overwhelmed by children in need of loving and caring families. Denying these children qualified families with the capacity and desire to open their hearts and homes is not only nonsensical; it's downright cruel.

Make no mistake about it: if this bill is signed into law, Kansas children will suffer. Instead of being placed with loving homes offering the support, stability, and opportunities they need to thrive, vulnerable children will continue to bounce around in the child welfare system and risk finding no permanent family at all. By passing this bill, the Legislature has sent these young people a very clear message that the adults in our state care more about political play than their well-being.

The Legislature has also sent a clear message to the valued LGBT citizens in our state that they are second-class citizens, undeserving of the rights and liberties afforded to their heterosexual neighbors. The fact that, in 2018, our Legislature has passed state-sanctioned discrimination is appalling and deeply embarrassing. Taxpayers should never have to foot the bill for hateful practices such as adoption discrimination.

SB 284 is in tension with the Fourteenth Amendment and extremely vulnerable to challenges under the equal protection and due process clause. Further, the bill raises serious Establishment Clause concerns. We are looking into all of these litigation options.

The ACLU of Kansas knows that LGBT Kansans are not second-class citizens. We know that our state's children, especially the most vulnerable among them, deserve more than politicians

who are willing to jeopardize their future for personal political gain. And we know that our state can—and will—rise above this discriminatory bill to embrace the values of justice, equality, and freedom that make us the Free State. Love may not have won today, but it will win in the end. And until that day comes, we vow to keep fighting.”