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## DIGEST

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HB 597 Original

2016 Regular Session

Mike Johnson

**Abstract:** Provides for the rights of religious organizations and its employees and clergy to refuse participation in certain marriages.

Present law protects the free exercise of religion.

Proposed law retains present law and creates the Pastor Protection Act.

Proposed law provides that a religious organization, an individual employee of a religious organization or a clergy or minister may not be required to solemnize or provide services, accommodations, facilities, goods, or privileges for a purpose related to the solemnization, formation, or celebration of any marriage if doing so would cause the organization to violate a sincerely held religious belief. Provides that a refusal pursuant to proposed law shall not serve as the basis for a civil, criminal, or other punitive action by the state or a political subdivision.

(Adds R.S. 13:5243-5245)