

To the Legislators of the State, Veterans & Military Affairs Committee,

We, diverse Faith Leaders from across the state of Colorado, ask you to reject HB1123. Our religious freedom, as protected in the First Amendment of the US Constitution, is a central value that allows us to worship and practice our deeply held faith.

However, we are saddened by the way this shared value is being used in ways that are in direct opposition to a central teaching in so many of our faiths; treat others as you want to be treated. Our religious freedom should not be used to justify harm or discrimination.

HB1123 calls for exemption for clergy, ministers, and religiously affiliated organizations from any requirement to participate in religious or other ceremonies, including marriage, that would conflict with their sincerely held religious beliefs. **This is already the law.** As clergy we have the right to refuse to marry anyone we do not want to marry based on our religious principles. Some of us will not perform inter-religious marriages, and others will. Some require course work and counseling before agreeing to marry, others do not. Some of us will perform same gender marriages, others will not. *We understand that we are currently protected to make these important choices.*

However, this bill goes further. This bill expands exemptions to include places of business or venues who claim any religious affiliation. Individuals and businesses could take advantage of the vague wording in the bill and manipulate it in ways that we can't yet foresee and that could have harmful effects. Providing commercial services doesn't mean someone is endorsing anyone's marriage, or agreeing with everything the customer believes. It simply means they are providing services to the public, and that they are open to business for everyone on the same terms.

While we have different religious beliefs, we share a common call to treat others as we want to be treated. We come together to let you and our communities know that we stand for love, kindness, compassion, inclusion and the common good.

We do not want *our names* and *our values* used to cause harm.

Please reject House Bill 1123.

Together for all,

The Interfaith Alliance of Colorado & Faith Leaders across Colorado

*Rev. Amanda Henderson, The Interfaith Alliance of Colorado
Rev. Susan S. McKee, United Church of Christ
Maureen McCormack, SL.
*Rev. Mike Morran
Bob Popovich
Rev. Laura Rossbert
*Rev. Wayne A. Laws, United Church of Christ
Rev. Jessica Rooks, Cameron United Methodist Church
Rev. Selena Wright
Rabbi Adam Morris, Temple Micah
Rev. Kristina Lizardy-Hajbi, Ph.D.
Rev. Nelson Bock, Wartburg College West
Rev. Gordon J. Kieft, American Baptist clergy
Rev. Rebecca Jones, St. Thomas Episcopal Church, Denver
Dilpreet S Jammu, Colorado Sikhs
Rev. Anne J. Scalfaro, Senior Pastor, Calvary Baptist Church of Denver
Rabbi Stephen Booth Nadav, Wisdom House Denver and Kavod Senior Life
The Ven. Dr. Claude d'Estrée, Professor and Buddhist Chaplain, University of Denver
The Reverend Elder Jim Mitulski, Interim Pastor, Metropolitan Community Church of the Rockies
Rev. Christopher Gilmore, Sixth Avenue UCC
*Rev. Dr. Jim Ryan, Doing Justice LLC
Rev. Diane Martin, UCC
Rev. Vickie Samland
Rev Julia McKay, Columbine Unitarian Universalist Church
Wendy Williams, Jefferson Unitarian Church
*Rev. Eric Strader, Christ Church Colorado
Rev. George Anastos, First Plymouth Congregational Church
*Rev. Bradley Laurvick, Senior Pastor Highlands UMC
The Rev. Jann Halloran, Prairie Unitarian Universalist Church
Rev. Beth Chronister, First Unitarian Society
Rabbi Joe Black, Temple Emanuel Denver
Rabbi Mark Asher Goodman, School Rabbi, Upper Division Director of Judaic Studies
Rabbi Brian Field, Judaism Your Way
The Rev. Dr. Kevin R. Maly, Pastor, St. Paul Lutheran Church
Rev. Mark Meeks, Capitol Heights Presbyterian Church
Rev. Dr. Nori J Rost, Minister, All Souls Unitarian Universalist Church
Rev. Gregory Young, Smoky Hill United Methodist Church

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Fern Bowman
Rev. Dustin Adkins, Christian Church, Disciples of Christ
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*Pastor Alycia Erickson, Colorado Springs
Hal Simmons, Abrahamic Initiative
*Rev. Kathy Escobar, The Refuge
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Rev. Wendy Kidd, Gunnison
Rev. Dr., James Laurie
Rev. Dr. Jane Vennard, The Iliff School of Theology
Rabbi Jamie Korngold
Rabbi Fred Greene, Congregation Har HaShem
Rabbi Ruth E. Gelfarb, Congregation Har HaShem
Rabbi Sarah Gershuny, Boulder