

Beat: Politics

Arizona governor vetoes controversial anti-gay bill

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USPA News - Arizona Governor Jan Brewer vetoed a controversial bill Wednesday that would have allowed business owners to use their religious beliefs to deny services to anyone believed to be gay or lesbian. "[The bill] does not address a specific and present concern related to religious liberty in Arizona," Brewer said during a news conference on late Wednesday.

She said the legislation, which is officially known as Senate Bill 1062, is worded broadly and could have negative consequence, and added that she does not want her state to be associated with discrimination. The controversial bill, passed by the Arizona Senate on February 19, was introduced as a protection of religious freedom because it would allow Arizona business owners to choose who they want to serve, depending on whether customers violate the owners' religious beliefs. It would give the business a religion, allowing for the rejection of service to certain customers, as described by the Politico news website. Cathi Herrod, president of the Center for Arizona Policy, the conservative group that pushed for the bill to be passed, expressed her disappointment with the governor's veto and called it "a sad day" for Arizona. "SB 1062 passed the legislature for one reason only: to guarantee that all Arizonans would be free to live and work according to their faith," she said. Citizens from both sides of the debate have voiced their opinion on this issue in recent weeks. But now, after the bill made international headlines, three Republican state senators who pushed for the bill have come out saying they regret voting for it, and do no longer want Bill 1062 to become law. Republican U.S. Senator John McCain, after Wednesday's veto, said lawmakers should now move on from the controversy and assure that everyone is able to enjoy the state of Arizona. The NFL had also become involved in recent days with Delaware Governor Jack Markell saying the location of the 2015 Super Bowl - due to be held in Arizona - should be changed if SB 1062 were to become law.

Article online:

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