

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 2048
By: Huffman
State Affairs
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Interested stakeholders report that the City of Houston recently subpoenaed sermons and speeches of several pastors who opposed a city ordinance that prohibited businesses from discriminating against gay and transgender residents. Although the city eventually withdrew the subpoenas, this situation sparked national discussions on religious liberty and freedom of speech. S.B. 2048 seeks to address this issue.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

S.B. 2048 amends the Civil Practice and Remedies Code to prohibit a governmental unit, in any civil action or other civil or administrative proceeding to which the governmental unit is a party, from compelling the production or disclosure of a written copy or audio or video recording of a sermon delivered by a religious leader during religious worship of a religious organization or compelling the religious leader to testify regarding the sermon.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2015.