As Introduced

132nd General Assembly
Regular Session
2017-2018

H. B. No. 36

Representative Vitale


A BILL

To amend section 3101.08 of the Revised Code to
provide that an ordained or licensed minister or religious society is not required to solemnize a marriage and a religious society is not required to allow any building or property of the religious society to be used to host a marriage ceremony if the marriage does not conform to the ordained or licensed minister's or religious society's sincerely held religious beliefs, to provide that an ordained or licensed minister or religious society is not subject to civil or criminal liability for such a denial, and to provide that the state and political subdivisions may not penalize or withhold benefits to an ordained or licensed minister or religious society for such a denial.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF OHIO:

Section 1. That section 3101.08 of the Revised Code be
amended to read as follows:

Sec. 3101.08. An ordained or licensed minister of any religious society or congregation within this state who is licensed to solemnize marriages, a judge of a county court in accordance with section 1907.18 of the Revised Code, a judge of a municipal court in accordance with section 1901.14 of the Revised Code, a probate judge in accordance with section 2101.27 of the Revised Code, the mayor of a municipal corporation in any county in which such municipal corporation wholly or partly lies, the superintendent of the state school for the deaf, or any religious society in conformity with the rules of its church, (A) The following persons or entities may join together as husband and wife any persons who are not prohibited by law from being joined in solemnize any marriage allowed by law:

(1) An ordained or licensed minister of any religious society or congregation within this state who is licensed to solemnize marriages;

(2) A judge of a county court in accordance with section 1907.18 of the Revised Code;

(3) A judge of a municipal court in accordance with section 1901.14 of the Revised Code;

(4) A probate judge in accordance with section 2101.27 of the Revised Code;

(5) The mayor of a municipal corporation in any county in which the mayor's municipal corporation wholly or partly lies;

(6) The superintendent of the state school for the deaf;

(7) Any religious society in conformity with the rules of its church.
(B)(1) No ordained or licensed minister described in division (A)(1) of this section or religious society described in division (A)(7) of this section is required to solemnize a marriage that does not conform to the ordained or licensed minister's or religious society's sincerely held religious beliefs.

(2) No religious society is required to allow any building or property of the religious society to be used to host a marriage ceremony for a marriage that does not conform to the religious society's sincerely held religious beliefs.

(C) If an ordained or licensed minister described in division (A)(1) of this section or a religious society described in division (A)(7) of this section refuses to solemnize a marriage or refuses to allow any building or property of the religious society to be used to host a marriage ceremony because of the ordained or licensed minister's or religious society's sincerely held religious beliefs, the ordained or licensed minister or religious society is immune from civil or criminal liability and neither the state nor a political subdivision of the state shall penalize or withhold any benefit or privilege from the ordained or licensed minister or religious society, including any governmental contract, grant, or license.

Section 2. That existing section 3101.08 of the Revised Code is hereby repealed.

Section 3. This act shall be known as the "Ohio Pastor Protection Act."