

# Governor Violates the Trust and Sovereign Authority of the California Voters

## *Schwarzenegger Places Special Interests Before California Students*

**SACRAMENTO** - Christian Newswire -- Last night (Sunday night, October 11<sup>th</sup>) Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger signed into law Senate Bill 572, authored by Senator Mark Leno (D-San Francisco). SB 572 requires the Governor of California to annually proclaim May 22 as Harvey Milk Day to honor the first openly homosexual politician. The bill also encourages schools to conduct "commemorative exercises" and programs that focus on Milk's contributions.

California Family Council (CFC) is disappointed that Governor Schwarzenegger has placed the interests of a specific group over the educational needs of students. SB 572 wrongly encourages schools to sacrifice students' class time in order to appease special-interest groups. "It is unfortunate that the Governor has chosen to favor a special-interest agenda over students and parents," stated Everett Rice, CFC's Legislative Director.

There are currently three "commemorative" days in California's calendar related to honoring teachers, John Muir, and the California Poppy flower. SB 572 promotes the controversial subject of sexual orientation in public school classrooms with children as young as five years of age.

SB 572 is similar to the bill the Governor Schwarzenegger vetoed last year. In the governor's veto message then, he stated that Milk's "contributions should continue to be recognized at the local level by those who were most impacted by his contributions."

"Despite tens of thousands of California citizens expressing their opposition to SB 572 by phoning or writing his offices, Governor Schwarzenegger has abandoned parents and students to assuage special interest groups," said Ron Prentice, CFC's director. "Commemorating Harvey Milk in public schools, primarily because of his sexual orientation, goes against the values and expectations of the majority of California's parents."

Research has found that student achievement is directly equated with the amount of time a student is engaged in academic learning. Regardless of one's opinion about Milk or the homosexual lifestyle, SB 572 inappropriately pressures schools to divert scarce resources and time away from educational needs, focusing instead on controversial, non-academic topics.

Schwarzenegger also signed into law Senate Bill 54, authored by Senator Mark Leno (D-San Francisco). SB 54 requires California to validate and recognize same- sex marriages performed outside the state prior to November 5, 2008, when California voters approved Proposition 8 in violation of the state constitution and the express will of the voters.

In response to the Governor's signing of SB 54, the California Family Council issued the following statement:

Governor Schwarzenegger and the Legislature continue their disregard for the expressed will of the people of California and the state Constitution which affirms traditional marriage's definition. Article I, Section 7.5 of the California Constitution specifically states "Only marriage between a man and a woman is valid or recognized in California." SB 54 explicitly violates California's Constitution.

"The governor's signing of SB 54 illustrates his disregard for the sovereign authority of California's voting citizens," stated Everett Rice CFC's Legislative Coordinator. "In 2000 and 2008, the voters expressed their desire at the ballot box to protect traditional marriage. They emphatically affirmed that marriage should retain its historical definition and identity. However, today the governor has joined with other elected representatives by choosing to place the demands of special interest groups over more than 7 million California voters."

California Family Council's director Ron Prentice also stated, "It is clear that the governor has forgotten that the people of California are sovereign, and the language of Proposition 8 is unambiguous regarding the people's intent. The signing of SB 54 dishonors the people of California and weakens the laws set forth by them through the initiative process. The failure of our elected representatives to support the people illustrates the need for new leaders who value the people over

special interests."

"This is tragic news for California families," state Karen England, executive director of Capitol Resource Institute. "The governor has chosen to completely undermine the will of the people -- the millions of Californians who have twice stated that they intend for only traditional marriage to be recognized in our state. By signing SB 54, the governor thumbs his nose at the initiative process and the voters who trust that their vote means something."

Last year the governor vetoed a bill identical to SB 572 that would have declared Harvey Milk Day in California. In his veto message, the governor cited the local influence of Milk in San Francisco, stating that Milk's recognition should not be mandated statewide.

"We don't know why the governor suddenly changed his mind and decided to impose a radical social agenda in every classroom," stated England. "One possible explanation is the influence of the governor's Hollywood friends. After a biopic on Milk received Academy Award recognition earlier this year, Hollywood political activists began lobbying the governor to sign the resurrected Harvey Milk Day bill. It seems that the governor places more value in the opinion of his Hollywood friends and their values than the values of the people who voted him into office."

The Harvey Milk Day bill was so controversial that the governor dedicated a phone line in his office to calls regarding Harvey Milk Day.

"The people of California have clearly spoken out against same-sex marriage and Harvey Milk Day, yet the legislature and the governor continue to push their agenda on our children," stated England. "Parents are outraged that their young children -- including kindergarteners -- will be forced to participate in activities 'commemorating' the life of a man known for his sexuality. Parents and voters are deeply disappointed and outraged by the governor's signing of these two unnecessary, agenda-pushing bills."

Sources: Christian Newswire and Capitol Resource Institute