

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Congressman Steve King made the following statement today about H.R. 1913, liberal “Hate Crimes” legislation. The legislation will be considered in the House on Wednesday. This evening, for one hour, Congressman King will host a Special Order on the House floor to speak against the legislation.

“Liberals in Congress want to create new laws to protect classes of people that have never been defined or identified as a class before. This unconstitutional bill aims to protect new classes of people based on ‘gender identity’ and ‘sexual orientation.’ These are classifications of people that are based on their inner feelings – their thoughts. Punishing ‘thought crimes’ will infringe on freedom of speech and religious expression, rights endowed to all Americans in the Constitution.

“Under this legislation, justice will no longer be equal. Instead, justice will depend on the race, sex, sexual orientation or protected status of the victim, setting up different penalties for the same crime. I support continuing the American tradition of equal justice under the law, and I oppose this unconstitutional ‘thought crimes’ bill.”

Background:

H.R. 1913 would make “gender,” “sexual orientation” and “gender identity” federally protected classes under the U.S. Criminal Code. It would segregate people based on sexual orientation, gender identity, and other vague terms. Such terms are not defined in the bill. However, they are very liberally defined by the medical and psychiatric community. “Hate crimes” legislation would afford preferential treatment to a special class of people. It would, in fact, require that only some people be treated equal under law.

This legislation could restrict free speech and eventually lead to criminal prosecution of religious leaders or members of religious groups based on their speech or other protected activities. The bill could also lead to an incitement to violence towards religious leaders. A 2007 F.B.I. Hate Crime Statistics report documented 1,477 offenses motivated by religious bias.

In addition, H.R. 1913 provides funding and grants to any state and local entity to investigate and litigate instances of hate crimes. This means that federal funding could be used to implement state hate crime laws, many of which are more restrictive than the federal hate crimes bill and limit First Amendment rights.