

**Senate File 473 - Reprinted**

SENATE FILE 473  
BY COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN  
SERVICES

(SUCCESSOR TO SF 236)

(As Amended and Passed by the Senate March 25, 2025)

**A BILL FOR**

- 1 An Act relating to certain sincerely held religious or moral
- 2 beliefs of child foster care providers and prospective
- 3 adoptive parents.
- 4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

1 Section 1. Section 237.10, Code 2025, is amended by adding  
2 the following new subsection:

3 NEW SUBSECTION. 9A. a. The department shall not do any of  
4 the following:

5 (1) Require an individual licensee to affirm, accept, or  
6 support a policy related to sexual orientation or gender identity  
7 that conflicts with the person's sincerely held religious or  
8 moral beliefs.

9 (2) Preclude a person from providing child foster care as an  
10 individual licensee based, in whole or in part, on the person's  
11 sincerely held religious or moral beliefs related to sexual  
12 orientation or gender identity, including but not limited to the  
13 person's intent to guide, instruct, or raise a child in a manner  
14 consistent with the person's sincerely held religious or moral  
15 beliefs.

16 b. The department, and the department's designees, shall not  
17 adopt a standard, policy, or rule that precludes an individual  
18 licensee from being considered as a child's child foster care  
19 provider based, in whole or in part, on the person's sincerely  
20 held religious or moral beliefs related to sexual orientation or  
21 gender identity.

22 c. This subsection shall not be interpreted to preclude  
23 the department, or the department's designee, from taking into  
24 account the sincerely held moral and religious beliefs, including  
25 but not limited to the sincerely held moral and religious beliefs  
26 related to sexual orientation and gender identity, of a child  
27 and the child's family of origin as compared to the sincerely  
28 held moral and religious beliefs of a potential child foster care  
29 provider when determining the most appropriate placement for the  
30 child consistent with the best interests of the child.

31 d. (1) A current or prospective child foster care provider  
32 may bring an action asserting a violation of this subsection. A  
33 court may provide the current or prospective child foster care  
34 provider injunctive relief, declaratory relief, or other relief  
35 as the court deems appropriate, and may award reasonable attorney

1 fees and costs.

2 (2) The attorney general may bring an action to enforce this  
3 subsection.

4 e. For purposes of this subsection, "gender identity" means  
5 the same as defined in section 279.78, and "sexual orientation"  
6 means the same as defined in section 216.2.

7 Sec. 2. Section 600.7A, Code 2025, is amended to read as  
8 follows:

9 **600.7A Adoption services provided by or through the**  
10 **department — selection of adoptive parent criteria.**

11 1. The department shall adopt rules which provide that if  
12 adoption services are provided by or through the department,  
13 notwithstanding any other selection of adoptive parent criteria,  
14 the overriding criterion shall be a preference for placing a  
15 child in a stable home environment as expeditiously as possible.

16 2. a. The department shall not do any of the following:

17 (1) Require a prospective adoptive parent to affirm, accept,  
18 or support a policy related to sexual orientation or gender  
19 identity that conflicts with the person's sincerely held  
20 religious or moral beliefs.

21 (2) Preclude a person from being qualified as a prospective  
22 adoptive parent based, in whole or in part, on the person's  
23 sincerely held religious or moral beliefs related to sexual  
24 orientation or gender identity, including but not limited to the  
25 person's intent to guide, instruct, or raise a child in a manner  
26 consistent with the person's sincerely held religious or moral  
27 beliefs.

28 b. The department, and the department's designees, shall not  
29 adopt a standard, policy, or rule that precludes a person from  
30 being considered as a child's prospective adoptive parent based,  
31 in whole or in part, on the person's sincerely held religious or  
32 moral beliefs related to sexual orientation or gender identity.

33 c. This subsection shall not be interpreted to preclude the  
34 department from taking into account the sincerely held moral and  
35 religious beliefs, including sincerely held moral and religious

1 beliefs related to sexual orientation and gender identity, of  
2 a child and the child's family of origin as compared to the  
3 sincerely held moral and religious beliefs of a prospective  
4 adoptive parent when determining the most appropriate placement  
5 for the child consistent with the best interests of the child.

6 d. (1) A prospective adoptive parent may bring an action  
7 asserting a violation of this subsection. A court may provide  
8 a prospective adoptive parent injunctive relief, declaratory  
9 relief, or other relief as the court deems appropriate, and may  
10 award reasonable attorney fees and costs.

11 (2) The attorney general may bring an action to enforce this  
12 subsection.

13 e. For purposes of this subsection, "gender identity" means  
14 the same as defined in section 279.78, and "sexual orientation"  
15 means the same as defined in section 216.2.