

1 A bill to be entitled

2 An act relating to conscience protection for actions  
3 of private child-placing agencies; amending s.  
4 409.175, F.S.; providing that a private child-placing  
5 agency is not required to place a child or be involved  
6 in the placement of a child or facilitate the  
7 licensure of a foster home which would violate the  
8 agency's written religious or moral convictions or  
9 policies; prohibiting the Department of Children and  
10 Families from taking actions related to licensure  
11 based on the agency's refusal to place a child or be  
12 involved in the placement of a child or facilitate the  
13 licensure of a foster home which violates the agency's  
14 written religious or moral convictions or policies;  
15 prohibiting certain entities from withholding grants,  
16 contracts, or participation in government programs  
17 from a private child-placing agency or affiliated  
18 agencies or homes based on the agency's refusal to  
19 place a child or be involved in the placement of a  
20 child or the licensure of a foster home which violates  
21 the agency's written religious or moral convictions or  
22 policies; providing that such refusal does not provide  
23 the basis for a claim for injunctive relief or  
24 compensatory or punitive damages; providing an  
25 effective date.  
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27 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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29 Section 1. Subsection (18) is added to section 409.175,  
30 Florida Statutes, to read:

31 409.175 Licensure of family foster homes, residential  
32 child-caring agencies, and child-placing agencies; public  
33 records exemption.—

34 (18) (a) A private child-placing agency is not required to  
35 perform, assist in, recommend, consent to, or participate in the  
36 placement of a child or to facilitate the licensure of a family  
37 foster home when the proposed placement or licensure would  
38 violate the agency's written religious or moral convictions or  
39 policies.

40 (b) The department may not deny an application for, deny  
41 the renewal of, or revoke the license of a private child-placing  
42 agency, or the license of a family foster home or residential  
43 child-caring agency affiliated with a private child-placing  
44 agency, because of the refusal of the private child-placing  
45 agency to perform, assist in, recommend, consent to, or  
46 participate in the placement of a child or to facilitate the  
47 licensure of a family foster home which violates the agency's  
48 written religious or moral convictions or policies.

49 (c) The state or a local government or community-based  
50 care lead agency may not withhold a grant, contract, or  
51 participation in a government program from a licensed private  
52 child-placing agency, or from a family foster home or

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53 residential child-caring agency affiliated with such a private  
54 child-placing agency, because of the refusal of the private  
55 child-placing agency to perform, assist in, recommend, consent  
56 to, or participate in the placement of a child or to facilitate  
57 the licensure of a family foster home which violates the  
58 agency's written religious or moral convictions or policies.

59 (d) Refusal of a private child-placing agency to perform,  
60 assist in, recommend, consent to, or participate in the  
61 placement of a child or to facilitate the licensure of a family  
62 foster home which violates the agency's written religious or  
63 moral convictions or policies does not provide the basis for a  
64 claim for injunctive relief or compensatory or punitive damages  
65 against such private child-placing agency or any operator,  
66 owner, or personnel thereof.

67 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2015.