



Questions to Be Raised During the Nomination Hearing of Governor Sam Brownback for Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom

Context: As Governor of Kansas, Mr. Sam Brownback used religious conviction as a justification for the permission and promotion of discrimination as well as the promotion of conservative causes. It is not the conservatism that is problematic, it is the use of religiosity to justify the taking away the rights of others who do not share your religious views or your conservative agenda.

Problematic Issues:

1. Interpretation of “religious freedom”

Background: As Governor, you supported the passage of the Campus Religious Freedom Bill, which became law in March 2016, which requires public colleges and universities in Kansas to recognize and fund religious student associations, even those that discriminate in their membership. The law creates a right to public funding for religious student groups, including those that discriminate against LGBT people, women, African Americans, students with disabilities, or anyone else, so long as the student group’s discrimination is rooted in a religious belief.

Questions: Do you believe that a religious belief allows a person, business, or government entity to discriminate against another person based on his religion, sexual orientation, race or ethnicity, or disability? Do you believe laws should give individuals or organizations a license to discriminate based on a religious belief? Do you believe that state or federal funding can be granted to entities that discriminate as long as that discrimination is based on religious conviction?

2. Attitudes about Muslims

Background: As Governor, you signed anti-Shariah legislation into law in 2012. David Yerushalmi, an Arizona attorney who has long questioned the loyalty of American Muslims, is responsible for creating the language for anti-Shariah legislation under the guise of prohibiting foreign law in American courts. Anti-Muslim hate groups on the frontlines of the anti-Shariah law movement engage in anti-Muslim rhetoric and propaganda.



Questions: What is Shariah law? Given your understanding of Shariah law, how will you work with Muslim-majority countries in an informed manner? Some Americans view anti-Shariah law legislation as discriminatory and a solution without a problem. How do you plan to work productively with Muslims around the world who perceive you to harbor anti-Muslim sentiments and feel that you operate under a misunderstanding of Islam?

3. Close ties with dubious religious groups

Background: You have ties with the New Apostolic Reformation (NAR) movement, which seeks “dominion” over politics, culture, and all other aspects of daily life. The NAR movement sees no distinction between the secular and religious and wishes to obliterate the separation between church and state. The movement also works to mass convert Jews to Christianity. You have attended NAR movement events such as *The Call* prayer rallies organized by Lou Engle, *The Response*, a 2011 prayer vigil hosted by then-Governor Rick Perry, and *The Kettle Tour*, a national series of events meant to join the present generation’s prayers with those of the past to form a “synergy of the ages.”

Questions: The NAR movement advocates for the mass conversion of Jews to Christianity. What are your views on the NAR movement? Do you believe that there should be a movement to encourage Jews to convert to Christianity? How do you feel about organizations that encourage Jews to convert to Christianity? As Ambassador-at-Large, you will be duty-bound to protecting the rights of persons of all faith or no faith. Do you feel that you can do that without allowing your bias toward Christianity cloud your judgment?

4. Gay marriage and LGBTQ rights

Background: As Governor of Kansas, you acted to strip LGBT Kansans of their rights and to protect discrimination against these individuals by businesses, universities, and government. After the June 2015 U.S. Supreme Court ruling making same-sex marriage legal in all 50 states, you issued a “religious objection” executive order in July 2015 allowing taxpayer-funded social service organizations to deny services to LGBT citizens, and specifically exempting all religiously affiliated organizations from having to recognize legal same-sex marriages or accommodate them in any way. Your opposition was deemed so extreme that a federal judge put the state on probation. A federal judge is monitoring every aspect of the state’s implementation of same-sex marriage for the next three years.

Questions: Do you believe that religious conviction allows individuals or governments to discriminate or deny rights to someone based on his sexual orientation? Do you believe that laws that make same-sex marriage legal can and/or should be disregarded? What is your view on Uganda’s “Kill the Gays” law, supporters of whom were trained by Kansas



City's International House of Prayer and affiliated with your former roommate and New Apostolic Reformation (NAR) leader Lou Engle?

5. Views on abortion

Background: You have said that your greatest contribution as governor was fierce opposition to abortion: "We're a pro-life state and we're not going back." As Governor, you cut off Medicaid reimbursements to Planned Parenthood. You wrote a letter to President Trump and Congress to defund Planned Parenthood and pass legislation restricting abortion.

Questions: What role will your Catholic faith play in your duties as Ambassador-at-Large for Religious Freedom? Will your stance on abortion guide your assessment of organizations, groups, or states that view abortion as a legal right?

6. Views on Christianity versus pluralism

Background: As Governor, you convened multiple prayer gatherings and campaigns with a clearly conservative Christian bent. You did not hold similar gatherings to celebrate the faiths of Jews, Hindus, Muslims, Buddhists, or those who practiced any other faith. As Governor, you were responsible for reaching out to and representing all Kansans, not just the Christians or conservative Christians.

Questions: Do you believe that you will be representing Christian America in your role as Ambassador-at-Large? How will you convince us that you will operate in a more pluralistic manner in this position? How will you accomplish this? As Governor, you should have represented people of all faiths, but didn't. As Ambassador-at-Large, you will have the duty to uphold the rights of people of many faiths. How will you defend the rights of the Baha'i, the Rohingya, or Shia Muslims? Will your bias cloud your judgment, for example in a case such as the Central African Republic, where originally it was Christians who were attacking Muslim communities and destroyed all the mosques? How will you work to protect and advocate for the rights of religious minorities when they are not Christian?

7. Affiliations with problematic individuals and groups

Background: As Governor, you regularly consulted with Tony Perkins of the Family Research Council (FRC). In 2010, the FRC -- under Perkins' leadership -- was classified as a hate group by the Southern Poverty Law Center. Among statements made by Perkins:

1. *Islam is such a danger and American Muslims should not have the same religious freedoms as other citizens.*





2. *We are a nation that was founded on Judeo-Christian principles. This is the foundation of our nation.*
3. *Islam is “evil.”*
4. *LGBT-inclusive Christians shouldn’t have the same religious rights as conservatives because they aren’t real Christians.*

Questions: Do you share the views espoused by Tony Perkins? How will you distinguish your role as Ambassador-at-Large from the views expressed by Tony Perkins? Did you know that Islam is one of the three Abrahamic faiths?

