

Cook calls 'religious objection' laws dangerous

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In this June 2, 2014, file photo, Apple CEO Tim Cook speaks at the Apple Worldwide Developers Conference event in San Francisco. Cook says that so-called "religious objection" legislation being introduced in a number of states like Indiana and Texas is dangerous. In an op-ed piece for The Washington Post, Cook said that the bills under consideration "have the potential to undo decades of progress toward greater equality." (AP Photo/Jeff Chiu, File)

Apple CEO Tim Cook said that so-called "religious objection"

legislation being introduced in a number of states is dangerous and bad for business.

The bills, like the one enacted last week in Indiana, create a [legal framework](#) for individuals, mostly [business owners](#), to claim that a law or regulation mandated by the government infringes on their [religious beliefs](#).

In an op-ed piece for The Washington Post, the leader of the nation's largest corporation said that the bills under consideration "have the potential to undo decades of progress toward greater equality."

He cited actions taken by lawmakers in Texas, Indiana and Arkansas, but said that a "wave of legislation" has been introduced in more than two dozen states.

Cook said he was opposing the legislation on behalf of Apple Inc. He came out as gay in October, saying that he wanted to make a difference for others.

In a letter he wrote then, Cook said, "there are laws on the books in a majority of states that allow employers to fire people based solely on their [sexual orientation](#). There are many places where landlords can evict tenants for being gay, or where we can be barred from visiting sick partners and sharing in their legacies. Countless people, particularly kids, face fear and abuse every day because of their sexual orientation."

Cook said in his criticism of religious objection laws that he has great respect for religious freedom, but that it can never be "used as an excuse to discriminate."

The legislation is not a political or religious issue, but rather "about how we treat each other as human beings," Cook said.

"Opposing discrimination takes courage. With the lives and dignity of so many people at stake, it's time for all of us to be courageous," Cook said.

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