

# California legislature passes bill banning "gay panic" defense, area Senator and Assemblywoman both vote NO.

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The California legislature on August 27, 2014, [passed a bill](#) that would remove "gay panic" as reason to reduce charges from homicide to manslaughter. The bill now moves to Governor Brown's desk.

Once signed by the Governor, California will become the first state where "gay panic" is no longer a viable legal defense against homicide charges. In the past, people who murdered members of the LGBT community would often claim they acted in a "moment of passion", and met the requirements for a reduced charge of manslaughter. This often worked, with murderers serving little or no jail time. Now, acts of violence against the gay community will be treated as no different from any other act resulting in the death of the victim.

Both Senator Jean Fuller and Assemblywoman Connie Conway voted against the bill. Apparently, both feel that discovering someone is LGBT is sufficient reason to commit murder, but only be charged with manslaughter. I've sent emails to the Senator and Assemblywoman, asking if they can tell me why they voted NO on AB 2501, and I'm looking forward to hearing their reasoning.

It's really not difficult to figure out why both local state officials voted against the bill, however. Every NO on Wednesday's vote was made by a Republican. It's important that the local LGBT community recognizes that the GOP is the party that will not protect you, considers you a second class citizen, and considers the votes of its Tea Party and right wing base more important than your rights. Keep this in mind in November, in local, state, and Federal elections.