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(Neb.) - Neb. AG: City ordinances protecting gays illegal

By: John Thayer Posted at: 05/04/2012 03:57 PM

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) - The Nebraska attorney general's office says cities can't adopt ordinances protecting people from discrimination for being gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender because the state's anti-discrimination laws don't extend to sexual orientation.

Attorney General Jon Bruning says ordinances like one in Omaha barring employers from discriminating on the basis of sexual orientation are illegal. His office says in a legal opinion issued Friday that voters can approve changes to city charters extending such protections, but local governments lack the authority.

Critics panned the opinion as political posturing by Bruning, a Republican running for U.S. Senate. And Omaha's city attorney says the city disagrees with the opinion and will go to court if someone sues.

A state senator who proposed legislation that would have barred such ordinances requested the opinion.

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