

Conservatives push Apple to restore manifesto app

by [Daniel Burke](#)

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WASHINGTON (RNS) Conservative Christians are biting mad that an app for their manifesto opposing gay marriage and abortion has been plucked from Apple's popular online store.

"With 300,000+ available apps, it is surprising to us that there couldn't continue to be an app focused on ... views that millions of Americans have in common," said Charles Colson, an evangelical leader and co-drafter of the manifesto, known as the Manhattan Declaration.

The app took users to the 4,000-word statement released last year that urges Christians to safeguard human life from conception to natural death, and to defend traditional marriage and religious liberty.

The declaration, which vows civil disobedience when those positions are threatened, has been signed by 478,000 Christians, according to its drafters, including a number of prominent Catholic bishops and evangelicals.

Apple posted the Manhattan Declaration app in its iTunes and iPhones stores in October, saying it had "no objectionable content," according to publicists for the manifesto.

But liberal groups criticized Apple for approving the app, which

they call "anti-gay." More than 7,700 people signed a petition asking the company to remove it. They particularly disliked the app's quiz, which scored users on the "correct" answers to hot-button questions about gay marriage and abortion.

An Apple spokeswoman confirmed to CNN on Wednesday (Dec. 1) that the company removed the app from its iTunes and iPhone stores last week. "It violates our developer guidelines by being offensive to large groups of people," Natalie Kerris told CNN, adding Apple had heard from "large groups of people," who complained about the app.

Three of the Manhattan Declaration's drafters -- Colson, Princeton University scholar Robert George, and Beeson Divinity School professor Timothy George -- have written a public protest letter to Apple CEO Steve Jobs.

"We hope that you will see how wrong it would be to let one side shut down the opposing side in a debate by slandering their opponents with prejudicial labels such as 'bigot' or 'homophobe,'" the letter says.

Nearly 25,000 people have signed a petition asking Apple to restore the app, according to the Manhattan Declaration's website.