

Anti-LGBTQ+ Bills in Rhode Island

The Rhode Island legislature should resist dangerous anti-transgender proposals and remain a leader on LGBTQ+ equality.

Rhode Island has been a leader in recognizing the humanity and equality of LGBTQ+ people for decades and was the second state in the US to comprehensively protect transgender people. The residents of this state are proud of that legacy.

As we are seeing a sweeping campaign of attacks targeting transgender people across the country, Rhode Island has the opportunity and responsibility to lead once again by saying no to attempts to bring this dangerous and disingenuous campaign to our state.

A strong partnership between Rhode Island communities, schools, and families is important to ensure all youth grow up in a safe, supportive, and welcoming environment.

But a slate of bills modeled on out-of-state legislation threatens to disrupt that partnership and target LGBTQ+ youth.

The Rhode Island legislature should lead once again, resist all these dangerous attacks and oppose the following bills with harmful proposals, including:

- Bills that target transgender students for exclusion, prohibiting them from playing on the school sports teams with their friends and potentially subjecting any female student athletes to invasive medical exams ([H7727](#), [S2660](#))
- Several bills that threaten schools and teachers with penalties for not complying with vague requirements to allow virtually any individual parent to dictate school lesson plans, remove teachers' and school staffs' ability to support LGBTQ+ students in school, and mandate the forced outing of LGBTQ youth without regard to students' safety ([H7781](#), [S2424](#), [H7873](#), [S2041](#))
- A bill that could be used to classify any material with LGBTQ+ content as obscene and levy criminal charges ([S2104](#))
- A dangerous bill that would threaten the health of every Rhode Islander by allowing any medical provider, healthcare facility, or insurance plan to refuse to provide care based on the vague assertion that it violates their conscience ([S2423](#))
- A ban on essential medical care for transgender youth, as well as rolling back protections in healthcare insurance coverage ([H7884](#), [S2703](#))



These bills detract from fostering healthy growth and development among Rhode Island's youth, irrespective of their backgrounds or identities. Our aim is to cultivate environments where young people can flourish, learn, and develop critical thinking skills, contributing positively to their communities.

Ensuring a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment is crucial for the well-being and educational success of all youth. Research underscores that such environments yield better outcomes for young people. Rhode Island has already demonstrated success in supporting both transgender and non-transgender youth under current laws.

While parents play a vital role in their children's education, so-called “parents’ rights” bills do not align with that goal. Rather, they are part of a broader trend seeking to pit parents, schools, and students against each other and exclude transgender youth from full participation in school and society.

Instances from other states like Florida and New Hampshire illustrate the detrimental impact of similar bills. They instigate fear among healthcare providers, educators, and families. The education bills discourage faculty from addressing critical issues like anti-LGBTQ+ and racist bullying, ultimately erasing the presence of LGBTQ+ students and families in educational settings. Additionally, these bills lead to the removal of essential literature that could aid students in understanding themselves and others.

We’ve also seen how even debating dangerous anti-LGBTQ+ proposals such as these negatively affect [young people’s well-being, increasing anxiety and depression.](#)

That’s not Rhode Island’s legacy, and it’s not what our young people deserve.

For more information, contact:

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