

Document 1 - These LGBTQ lawmakers want to make their states a refuge for trans kids

The Washington Post, by Anne Branigin, May 7, 2022

For the past few months, Colorado state Rep. Brianna Titone (D) has kept a close eye on the bills neighboring states have been proposing — bills that aim to curb the rights of transgender children from participating in youth sports, accessing bathrooms and getting gender-affirming health care.

There's Arizona, Oklahoma and Utah, which all passed laws barring trans kids (...) from playing on teams that align with their gender identity. [...] And in Idaho, lawmakers sought to criminalize the act of seeking gender-affirming care out of state.

Then there's Texas, where earlier this year, Gov. Greg Abbott (R) directed child welfare services to investigate gender-affirming care for children as "child abuse." [...]

On Tuesday, Titone joined a group of LGBTQ legislators across the country who announced plans to offer refuge to transgender youth and their families amid an unprecedented wave of anti-LGBTQ legislation, much of it directed toward trans kids.

Legislators say the effort was inspired by "sanctuary" laws that have similarly shielded undocumented immigrants, and, more recently, those seeking abortions from states where that care has been restricted and/or criminalized. [...]

So far, 20 states have pledged to or have already introduced bills that offer a legal shield to families displaced by anti-LGBTQ policies, as well as physicians who provide gender-affirming care. Some are calling it a "rainbow wall."

The Victory Institute said lawmakers have been in conversation about the trans refuge legislation since mid-April. But Politico's publication of a leaked Supreme Court draft opinion, which showed that five justices were ready to overturn *Roe v. Wade*, highlights the urgency of passing these protections, LGBTQ lawmakers say. [...]

Many conservative lawmakers who have proposed bills curbing LGBTQ rights say their goal is to protect children.

Alabama state Rep. Wes Allen (R), who championed the state's ban on gender-affirming health care, compared the law to others that ban minors from drinking alcohol or vaping.

"This legislation is about protecting children from making decisions as children that their brains are not yet developed enough to understand," he said. [...]

In California, a proposed sanctuary bill could serve as a template for other states.

The bill, S.B. 107, would reject out-of-state judgments that remove trans kids from their parents based on their parents allowing their child to receive gender-affirming care. It would also bar

providers from complying with out-of-state subpoenas seeking health or related information about people who get gender-affirming care in the state. [...]

But there are limits to these kind of bills (...). Many trans youth lack supportive family, a fact that underlies higher rates of homelessness and depression. And families who do support their trans children may not have the means to relocate to more liberal states, especially ones that have higher costs of living.

Lawmakers also said that getting the language of these sanctuary bills right will be challenging, and must be tailored to each state. [...]

Document 2 - States Forming 'Rainbow Wall' for Transgender Youth, Families

Bloomberg Law, by Joyce Cutler, May 3, 2022

Lawmakers and civil rights advocates announced Tuesday a 19-state coalition to create “a rainbow wall” of transgender refuges and pass laws to provide safe havens for trans youth and their families.

Bills advancing in California, New York, and Minnesota and being introduced in 16 other states are part of a national legislative campaign to protect trans youth and their families seeking gender-affirming care in response to laws passed in Texas and elsewhere. The bills, if enacted, would prevent enforcement of out-of-state orders restricting parental rights based on the parent approving care such as surgeries or drugs used to help individuals transition from their gender assigned at birth.

LGBTQ state legislators are introducing legislation “to push back on the far-right wing attacks on trans kids and their families, to move our states to being places of refuge for these kids and their family, a rainbow wall, if you will, against the hatred that is tragically spreading across our country,” California state Sen. Scott Wiener (D) told reporters at a news conference.

Advocates will introduce legislation in Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Kansas, Kentucky, Maine, Michigan, New Hampshire, New Mexico, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont, Washington, and West Virginia in their next legislative sessions.

“We think it’s new and it’s relatively untested, too, but in the immigration context, we’ve taken steps to be welcoming as a state when other states haven’t been to undocumented,” New York state Sen. Brad Hoylman (D) said in an interview.

“I would say that we have a free rider situation where states like California and New York are going to provide health care and other services to transgender kids and their families because other states don’t want to pay for it and, frankly, don’t think that this population is worth it,” Hoylman said. “It is an extremely sad state of affairs for transgender youth and their families in states like Texas, Louisiana, Alabama, Idaho, and others.”

Alabama’s law (S.B. 184), for example, makes it a crime to provide medical procedures or prescribe medications, including testosterone or estrogen, in order to “alter” a minor’s gender or delay puberty. The law carries a penalty of up to 10 years in prison and a \$15,000 fine.

The New York legislation took its inspiration from bills protecting abortion rights, said Hoylman, the bill’s co-author. New York, like California, is debating safe harbor legislation for those seeking abortions in states that restrict abortion and that allow civil lawsuits against those who assist people in obtaining abortions.

“Trans kids and their parents are under attack right now across the country, and they’re under attack with a viciousness that we at Planned Parenthood of California are sadly all too familiar with,” Lisa Matsubara, Planned Parenthood Affiliates of California general counsel and vice president of policy, told reporters.

**Document 3 - 'Catastrophic' number of state bills target transgender youth, advocates say
The bills would limit access to school sports and gender-affirming health care.**

ABC News, by Meredith Deliso, March 7, 2021

A growing number of states have introduced legislation that LGBTQ advocates say targets transgender youth and their access to school sports and gender-affirming health care.

At least two dozen states have introduced bills this year that would ban transgender girls and women from participating in sports consistent with their gender identity, compared to 18 last

year, according to the American Civil Liberties Union. Sixteen states have also introduced bills that would prohibit and in some cases criminalize gender-affirming care for trans youth, such as puberty-blocking medications and hormones, up from 15 last year, according to the ACLU. [...]

LGBTQ advocates say the bills are discriminatory, transphobic and unnecessary measures that stem from previous attempts to impose "bathroom bills," restricting what facilities transgender individuals can use, and before that, overturn marriage equality.

"Now they're taking on trans kids -- some of the most vulnerable members of the LGBTQ community -- and trying to isolate them and prohibit them from accessing care and, frankly, pushing this narrative that being trans is something that is put on for some kind of advantage, that it's pushed on children by adults," Kate Oakley, state legislative director and senior counsel for the Human Rights Campaign, told ABC News. "It's really invalidating transgender identity."

Among the bills under consideration this session, one passed last week -- the so-called Mississippi Fairness Act, which would ban transgender girls and women from competing on female sports teams in schools and universities. [...]

The sponsor of the Mississippi bill, Republican state Sen. Angela Hill, told ABC News she was inspired to introduce the legislation after learning about two girls' championship-winning transgender high school runners in Connecticut, where state policy allows high school athletes to compete as the gender with which they identify. Mississippi does not have a policy regarding transgender high school athletes.

"When you talk about equality, you need to look at equality in female sports," she said. "And that's what we're trying to protect, is female sports from being destroyed." [...]

"This issue is imminent in Mississippi," she said. "We have to make a statement that women matter, female sports matter." [...]

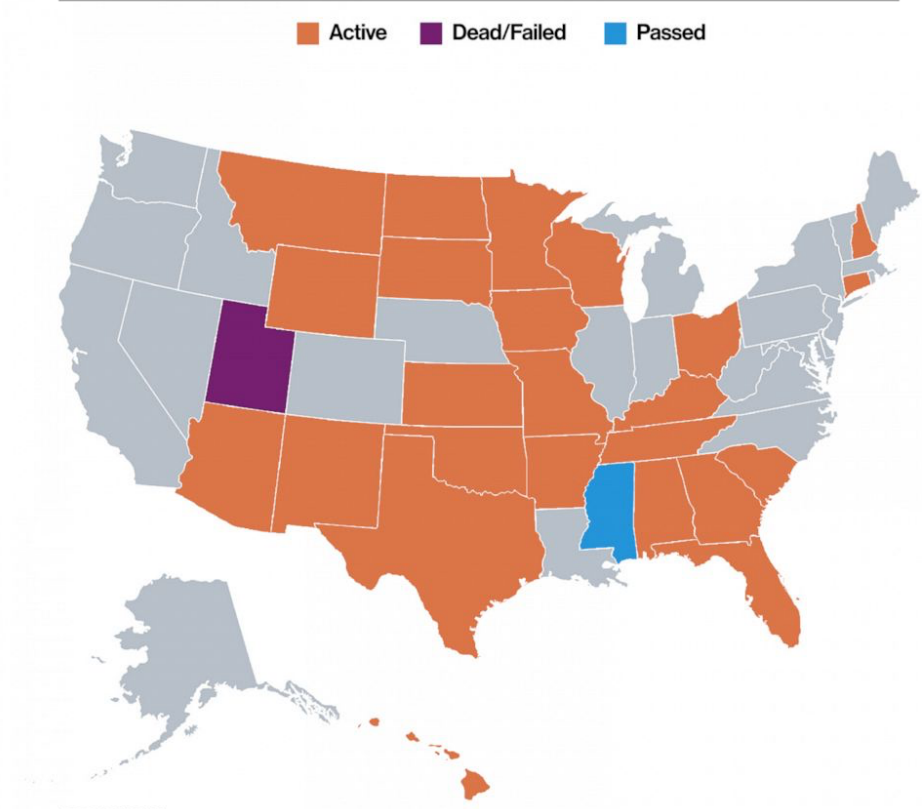
States have yet to pass health care bills impacting trans youth, though one in Alabama that would make it a felony to treat minors with puberty-blockers, hormone therapy or surgery passed the state Senate last week. [...]

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that trans youth have access to "comprehensive, gender-affirming, and developmentally appropriate health care that is provided in a safe and inclusive clinical space." [...]

Any bill targeting transgender youth that is signed into law will likely be met with legal challenges. Idaho became the first state to pass a law banning transgender women from competing in women's sports last year. A federal district court suspended the law and it has yet to be enacted.

But even if they aren't enacted, "the damage is done" (...). [...]

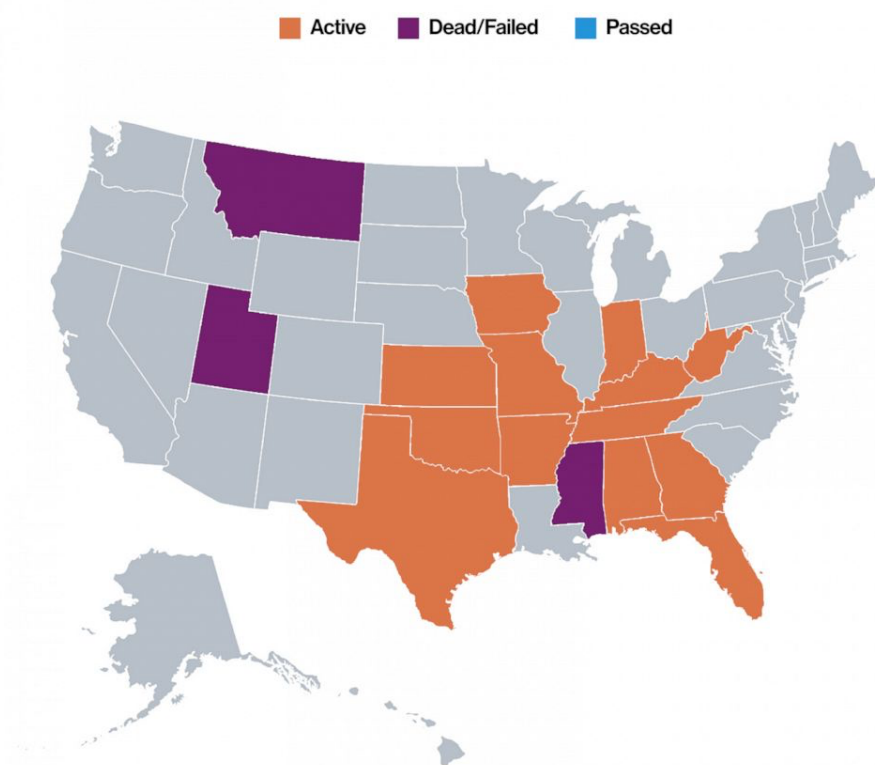
Where bills excluding transgender youth from athletics are under consideration



AS OF 2/26/21
SOURCE: ACLU



Where bills prohibiting gender-affirming health care for transgender youth are under consideration



AS OF 3/5/21
SOURCE: ACLU



Document 5 - Protesters rally against the criminalization of medical treatment for trans kids in front of the state Capitol on Sunday, Feb. 27, 2022.



As Texas moves to treat gender-affirming care for trans kids as 'child abuse,' families and advocates worry about the future