



TWITTER.COM/AZ_RWW PATREON/AZRWW

ARIZONA PASSES TWO TRANSPHOBIC LAWS ON EVE OF TRANS DAY OF VISIBILITY



By Arizona Right Wing Watch

Originally published on LeftCoastRightWatch.org on April 1, 2022, visit LeftCoastRightWatch.org for story links, more photos/videos, and similar articles on politics and far-right extremism across the West Coast.

Cover edits by LCRW editor-in-chief Abner Häuge.

Rogers has also been a sponsor and co-sponsor for other anti-LGBTQ+ laws being considered this session. Arizona alone has introduced over a dozen bills - one would protect teachers and school employees who misgender trans students, another continues to erode trans youth's access to gender-affirming healthcare. Excitement from lawmakers like Rogers doesn't come from a place of "protecting children," it comes from a complete disdain for LGBTQ individuals.

When Rogers was a guest speaker at Nick Fuentes' white nationalist America First Political Action Conference, she posted on Telegram "AFPAC is legit. Only getting bigger. No trannies." Fuentes would later describe the event as a "Christian fascist" rally.

In total, Wendy Rogers has expressed dozens of hateful comments geared towards the LGBTQ community. She uses slurs when referring to trans people, jokes about them being killed, calls LGBTQ people and their allies "groomers," and has even criticized the RNC and Republicans for accepting gay conservatives like Richard Grenell and Dave Rubin.

With Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis recently signing HB 1157, also known as the "Don't Say Gay" bill, it's clear this is a nationwide crusade against the LGBTQ+ community. On Twitter, former Mississippi lawmaker Robert Foster called for trans people and their allies to be "lined up against a wall before a firing squad to be sent to an early judgment." Twitter deleted the tweet, but allowed the pro-genocide former representative to remain on the platform.

In an early committee hearing for SB1165, Arizona trans youth activist Skyler Morrison addressed the lawmakers about their continued attacks on her rights.

"I've had my childhood ripped away by legislators and I'm sick of fighting for my human rights but I won't stop until me and all my transgender friends are safe. Your cruel attempt at stripping away trans kids' rights bill by bill is not okay and will never be okay."

International Transgender Day of Visibility on March 31st is a celebration of trans people and the accomplishments of trans and gender-nonconforming individuals worldwide. The annual day of awareness is also a time to highlight continued discrimination and what still needs to be done to achieve trans liberation and justice. The day before this year's TDOV, Arizona Gov. Doug Ducey signed a 15-week abortion ban and two bills targeting trans youth in the state, SB1138 and SB1165, signaling another step backwards in LGBTQ+ rights.

SB1165: BANNING TRANS GIRLS AND WOMEN FROM SCHOOL SPORTS

Senate Bill 1165, titled the "Save Women's Sports Act" restricts trans women from competing in school sports in public and private schools at the K-12 level and institutes of higher education. Arizona joins over a dozen states now passing restrictions on trans student athletes, with Oklahoma Gov. Kevin Stitt also signing a near-identical bill by the same name on the same day. In total, 238 anti-LGBTQ bills have already been proposed during the first few months of this year's legislative session across the United States. There has been a sharp increase in bills discriminating against the LGBTQ community, with the majority singling out trans people.

This transmisogynistic law specifically targets transfeminine people. It comes after a wave of nonstop anti-trans panic and hate mongering directed at trans athletes, like NCAA University of Pennsylvania swimmer Lia Thomas. One of the two dozen members of the Arizona Republican Party sponsoring SB 1165, Rep. John Kavanagh, even referenced Thomas during its final hearing.

Before voting no on this bill, Rep. Jennifer Pawlik quoted statistics from the Arizona Interscholastic Association about trans students athletes showing that this SB1165 is singling out eight trans students out of 170,000 youth athletes total. Another similar bill in Utah was vetoed after Gov. Spencer Cox noted their anti-trans sports bill targeted four students out of 75,000 high school athletes.

Despite SB1165 passing through by the narrow Republican majority, it was still left unclear if the discriminatory law will be retroactive and force out trans students athletes already playing this season. When reached for comment, Rep.

Pawlik also confirmed there has been zero complaints about any trans athletes “dominating” their chosen sport.

SB1138: BANNING GENDER-AFFIRMING HEALTHCARE FOR TRANS YOUTH

The American Civil Liberties Union and National Center for Lesbian Rights are already preparing to challenge the other transphobic bill signed into law by Gov. Ducey. SB1138, cruelly titled “Arizona’s Children Deserve Help Not Harm Act” places bans on gender-affirming surgery for trans youth. Rep. Kavanagh and others in the Arizona Republican Party have continuously defended SB1138 by conflating trans healthcare with “female genital mutilation.”

“The media calls a bill to prevent doctors from performing irreversible sex change surgery on children anti-LGBTQ youth, but we are saving them from genital mutilation,” Kavanagh posted on Twitter.

In an clearcut example of SB 1138 discriminating against trans youth, the law has written exceptions on performing surgeries on children if they’re born intersex. It’s difficult to believe this is about “saving” kids from irreversible surgeries when they’re targeting a very small minority (the vast majority of gender-affirming surgeries are for those over 18) and making an exception for the 1 in 1000 babies born intersex. Before voting against the bill, Rep. Kelli Butler also recognized that parents in Arizona could also still approve of surgeries for their teenager if their child is cisgender.

The original version of SB1138 had sweeping bans on trans youth healthcare, banning it outright. The bill initially planned to block Arizona’s Medicaid program (AHCCCS) from providing coverage for trans youth. Doctors who offer referrals for gender-affirming care would have been “subject to discipline” for “unprofessional conduct.” Puberty blockers, hormone, and testosterone treatment would have also been banned and trans youth receiving medication would have been forced to discontinue. The American Academy of Pediatrics has reported trans adolescents using puberty blockers and receiving gender-affirming care greatly reduces suicidal thoughts for trans youth.

While defending the “Arizona’s Children Deserve Help Not Harm Act,” Rep.

Mark Finchem took his time as an opportunity to complain about a conversion therapy ban passed in Pima County, Arizona back in 2017. Conversion therapy is an abusive, pseudoscientific practice that characterizes LGBTQ+ people as all having a “mental illness” to be cured.

“They have prohibited professional psychiatric care givers from giving counsel to gender-confused individuals,” Finchem said. “Perhaps if Pima County wants to back off of that, I might reconsider my vote,” he said before voting yes on the bill to restrict gender-affirming healthcare.

Before voting yes on SB1138, Rep. Walt Blackman shared a story about meeting 13-year-old trans youth Arizona activist named Skyler Morrison.

“These decisions are important and critical, so before I took a vote I wanted to get to know the person that I would be making a decision on that represents this community,” Blackman said. “I don’t know if she is watching but I hope she is.”

Morrison quickly expressed her fears about the two transphobic laws passing, writing on Twitter, “I am truly disgusted and terrified for all of my trans family here.

FUTURE ATTACKS ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN ARIZONA AND THE U.S.

Closing out a dark day in Arizona, Gov. Ducey also signed SB1164, a bill that bans abortion after 15-weeks with no exceptions for rape and incest. There is also no exception for an individual requiring an abortion as part of their miscarriage treatment. The abortion restrictions mirror Mississippi’s ban currently under review by the Supreme Court, which will be a direct challenge to Roe v. Wade. Arizona joins the growing number of states quickly chipping away at abortion and trans healthcare, and this is only the beginning.

In response to this set of bills being signed by Gov. Ducey, Oath Keeper state senator Wendy Rogers tweeted “I am loving this.” Later Rogers said she was “Proud to have voted for all of these conservative bills. Glad that the governor signed them into law today.”