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Nevada Equality Coalition Announces Support for Gender-Affirming Healthcare Legislation During Equality Day Press Conference at Nevada Capitol

CARSON CITY, NEV. — The Nevada Equality Coalition wrapped up Equality Day at the Nevada State Capitol with a press conference today in support of Nevada Senate Bill 302, a shield law for gender-affirming health care legislation, that provides protections for healthcare providers and families who come to Nevada to obtain gender-affirming health care.

"With nearly 400 anti-LGBTQ+ laws nationwide introduced at the state level—many targeting transgender people—Nevada and bills like SB302 stand as protections against efforts to eradicate transgender people from public life," said Silver State Equality State Director André C. Wade during the conference. "We are standing up against hate to create a Nevada that is safe, healthy, just and fully equal for all LGBTQ+ people. We will continue to support all LGBTQ+ folks, especially our trans brothers and sisters, so they know they are valued and given every opportunity to build a future in a Nevada that accepts and supports them."

Earlier in the day, State Senator James Ohrenschall (D-Las Vegas) presented SB 302 before the Nevada Senate Commerce and Labor Committee. The bill would prohibit health care licensing boards from disqualifying or disciplining a person for providing gender-affirming services. It would also prohibit the governor from surrendering a person who is charged in another state with a criminal violation related to gender-affirming services. The full text is available [here](#).

"We often use the phrase Nevada Means Home," said Ohrenschall. "This vital legislation is the action that proves that mantra to be true. We are seeing hateful, decisive and uninformed legislation pop up across the country targeting the transgender community. With the passage of SB 302, we will let the world know that Nevada is welcoming of all folks, no matter their age, sex, race, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, political identity or religious beliefs. Sadly, families are fleeing states that wish to criminalize gender-affirming health care. They are welcome here. They can receive this life-saving health care here. Health care providers who wish to leave states that are hindering their ability to practice under their full scope of abilities will find a state that will respect their education, training and judgement. And, perhaps most importantly, we'll put them to work to help with Nevada's severe health provider shortage."

During the press conference, Senators Dallas Harris (D-Las Vegas) discussed her own LGBTQ+ focused legislation and discussed the newly formed LGBTQ+ Caucus of the Nevada Legislature. She also discussed the importance of exhibiting solidarity and inclusion towards the LGBTQ+ community.

Elizabeth Sterns, the mother of a transgender son, testified about how her family left Texas after anti-gender-affirming laws were introduced in the state legislature. She stated that even before the legislation was approved, her son's physicians were too worried about being sanctioned by the state to continue providing life-saving gender-affirming care.

"We left our family, friends and our home after Texas lawmakers tried to criminalize our support for our son," Sterns said. "Soon after we left Texas, even before the anti-trans legislation passed, the state decided that affirming transgender children could already be considered child abuse, and they began investigating families like ours. We could've been labeled as criminals for listening to our child and following the guidance of the many, many health care providers that were integral in providing my son's gender-affirming care. We are grateful and relieved to now be in Nevada, where sacred health care decisions are left to families and professionals. Please continue to make Nevada a safe place for families like mine."

The press conference was part of Equality Day activities at the Capitol, including a call-to-action for the LGBTQ+ community and allied Nevadans to let their voices be heard during the 2023 Nevada Legislature. Throughout the day, state legislators and LGBTQ+ allies and stakeholders showed their support for the LGBTQ+ community.

Equality Day was sponsored by the Nevada Equality Coalition whose members include [Battle Born Progress](#), [Equality Federation](#), [HRC in Nevada](#), [Gender Justice Nevada](#), [The LGBTQ Center of Southern Nevada](#), [Silver State Equality](#), [the Griffin Company](#), [PFLAG Carson Region](#), [Silver State Voices](#), [Progressive Leadership Alliance of Nevada](#), and [Planned Parenthood of the Rocky Mountains](#).

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