

## **Belmont Human Rights Commission Condemns the Recent Surge of Anti-Gay and Transgender Legislation**

An unwelcome and chilling surge of anti-gay and transgender legislation has battered the landscape. Recent extreme and hateful legislation in Texas, criminalizing efforts by parents and doctors to access and provide appropriate and essential medical care for transgender youth, and the “Don’t Say Gay or Trans Bill” (HB 1557/SB 1834) in Florida, which prevents teachers from mentioning gay and transgender issues or people in schools. These actions have signaled a growing effort to deprive LGBTQ+ youth of equal and inclusive treatment and to marginalize and reject them.

We decry the discriminatory impact that such laws have on youth and their families both in Texas and Florida, but also in Belmont, as our youth witness the differential and isolating treatment of those who share their identities. These efforts are pure forms of unlawful cruelty that deprive LGBTQ+ youth of affirming health care and education. These attacks take a grave mental and emotional toll on these youth and make them feel less safe. They can serve to escalate attacks on youth by marginalizing them where they live and attend school. This can add to the already high rates of suicides and suicidal ideation among transgender youth.

These legislative actions fly in the face of the constitutional rights of gay and transgender youth and must be challenged and struck down. Fortunately, a wave of objections from prominent businesses are attempting to halt the trajectory of these actions. We need to support these efforts. We can all do more.

What we all can do is to learn more about these attacks and their serious and even life-threatening consequences. Depression and suicidality among LGBTQ+ youth are the outcomes of marginalization, discrimination, bullying, homophobia, and familial and societal rejection. Support the businesses that do speak out and take a stance. Reassure our youth that they are safe and accepted here in Belmont.

Check out these resources to learn more about what you can do to help.

<https://www.aclu.org/legislation-affecting-lgbtq-rights-across-country>  
<https://freedomforallamericans.org/legislative-tracker/anti-transgender-legislation/>  
<https://www.hrc.org/get-involved>  
<https://www.glad.org/>

The Belmont Human Rights Commission is dedicated to fighting discrimination in all forms and increasing visibility and awareness of issues regarding diversity and discrimination in our community. If you have experienced discrimination in Belmont, please contact us at [belmont.hrc@gmail.com](mailto:belmont.hrc@gmail.com) or call 617-993-2795.