



Laura Belin <laurarbelin@bleedingheartland.com>

Iowa Leads the Nation in Anti-LGBTQ Legislation

Madeline Rocha Smith <madeline@oneiowa.org>
Bcc: desmoinesdem@bleedingheartland.com

Tue, Feb 23, 2021 at 1:10 PM



JOINT PRESS RELEASE

Contact: Keenan Crow
Director of Policy and Advocacy
Mobile: (712) 389-1924
Email: keenan@oneiowa.org

Iowa Leads the Nation in Anti-LGBTQ Legislation

[Des Moines]— With the release of SF 436, a bill that creates broad religious exemptions to generally applicable laws, legislators have shattered previous Iowa records for the number of anti-LGBTQ bills introduced and now have a new distinction to add: the nation's #1 state legislature for anti-equality legislation.

Out of the 15 anti-LGBTQ bills introduced this session, 13 deal specifically with transgender Iowans, and 8 exclusively target transgender youth. This targeted campaign is a disturbing new trend that continues to worsen in 2021.

One Iowa Action Executive Director Courtney Reyes commented on the trend in a statement: “The legislature should be focused on funding our public schools, getting struggling Iowans back on their feet, and vaccinating our residents. Instead, several legislators are focused almost exclusively on legislation intended to discriminate against LGBTQ Iowans. They have been so aggressive in their efforts that they have succeeded in releasing more anti-LGBTQ bills in this legislature than any other in the United States. Iowans are tired of seeing our state win these dubious awards on a national stage. Let’s get back to the work of creating an Iowa that works for everyone.”

“Iowa has a workforce crisis due to stagnant population growth and we need to employ a variety of strategies to grow our workforce to meet the demands of our businesses which includes fostering a welcoming environment for all people,” warned Dustin Miller, Executive Director of the Iowa Chamber Alliance.

"The Iowa Legislature has made it crystal clear this session that they don't believe transgender students should feel welcome and safe in their own state. These bills put LGBTQ students at unquestionably higher risk of suicide, self-harm, and depression," said Becky Ritland, Interim Executive Director of Iowa Safe Schools, who is available on request. "All these bills do is continue to spread hate and misinformation about LGBTQ Iowans, and Iowa Safe Schools will not stand for the bullying behavior being exhibited by the legislature."

"Although Iowa wins the sad distinction of having the largest number, these bills, particularly those attacking transgender young people, are a harmful trend in statehouses across the country," said Fran Hutchins, Executive Director of Equality Federation. "Our research shows that many of these bills use nearly identical language state to state and originate not from the needs of local communities but instead from well-funded anti-equality organizations who seek to divide and distract us. But with the hard work of local groups like One Iowa, and the prospect of passing the Equality Act at the federal level, a future is in sight in which no American in any part of the country is left vulnerable to discrimination because of who they are or who they love."

One Iowa Action is a 501(c)(4) organization working to preserve and advance the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer/questioning (LGBTQ) Iowans through grassroots efforts, voter education and advocacy.

Iowa Safe Schools provides safe, supportive, and nurturing learning environments and communities for LGBTQ and allied youth through education, outreach, advocacy, and direct services.

Equality Federation is a movement builder and strategic partner to state-based organizations advocating for LGBTQ people. From Equality Florida to Freedom Oklahoma to Basic Rights Oregon, Equality Federation amplifies the power of the state-based LGBTQ movement.

--

Maddie Rocha Smith

Communications & Events Coordinator
One Iowa
she/her/hers

Madeline@oneiowa.org
950 Office Park Rd, Suite 240
West Des Moines, IA 50265
O: 515-288-4019 x4

oneiowa

oneiowa
ACTION

One Iowa

[Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Instagram](#) | [Website](#)

One Iowa Action

[Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Website](#)

Make a tax-deductible donation today!



#1 In The Nation Press Release (1).pdf

100K