



MSPA

LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY ★ ADVOCACY ★ INNOVATION

MSPA Statement on Anti-Transgender Legislation in the United States *June 4, 2021*

In 2021 we have seen a massive growth of bills targeting transgender and gender non-conforming communities. Currently, there are over 100 bills in state legislatures that would affect the lives, bodies, and rights of transgender individuals.

Of these, at least 26 bills would affect transgender youth's access to healthcare. Many criminalize the prescription of puberty blockers (gonadotrophin-releasing hormone analogues),¹ which may be prescribed to transgender youth before the start of puberty to reversibly delay unwanted development of secondary sex characteristics.² Amongst transgender individuals there is a devastatingly high prevalence of depression and suicide attempts. Approximately 40% of transgender individuals report having attempted suicide in their life, with 92% of these individuals reporting at least one attempt by the age of 25.³ This is in stark contrast to the 0.5% of people in the general population who have attempted suicide in their life.⁴ Research clearly shows that puberty blockers are effective in reducing the rate of depression and suicidality in transgender individuals.²

The bills in question are clearly not at the suggestion of trained medical professionals. Guidelines from professional groups including the Endocrine Society and the American Psychological Association recommend the appropriate use of puberty blockers if requested by transgender youth.^{5,6} The Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) recently released a statement in opposition to the anti-transgender bills in reference noting that "Efforts to restrict the provision of gender-affirming health care for transgender individuals will reduce health care access for transgender Americans, promote discrimination, and widen already significant health inequities."⁷

As an LGBTQIA+ medical student organization, we are in a unique position to speak about these laws from both personal and professional experience. We, the Medical Student Pride Alliance (MSPA) National Leadership Team, oppose the anti-transgender legislation that would cause harm to so many in our country. These bills are in direct contradiction to years of evidence-based research and guidelines backed by medical professionals who care for transgender, non-binary, and gender-nonconforming individuals.

We are calling for lawmakers and governors to strike down these bills, understanding that they would directly harm transgender, non-binary, and gender-nonconforming communities, increase stigma and discrimination, and encourage irresponsible practices in healthcare. We instead recommend enacting legislation that would provide protections for healthcare for all, including the transgender, non-binary, and gender non-conforming community.

To help combat this legislation, MSPA is taking two actions:

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Action 1

We will be hosting an **LGBTQIA+ Health Advocacy Event Series** to help our members learn from past and present advocates:

CURED Preview Screening & Discussion

Screening Available: June 9-15

Discussion: June 14, 8 pm ET / 5 pm PT

Take part in a private, virtual screening of the new, award-winning documentary **CURED!** CURED depicts the pivotal battle undertaken by a diverse group of activists who ultimately prompted the American Psychiatric Association to remove homosexuality from its manual of mental illnesses in 1973—an epic victory for LGBTQ equality.

MSPA will also host a panel discussion and Q&A with CURED's co-director, Bennett Singer; activist and film interviewee, Rev. Magora Kennedy; retired Boston psychiatrist and film interviewee, Dr. Richard Pillard; and Senior Fellow for Advocacy & Government Affairs at The Trevor Project, Casey Pick.

[Register for the screening & discussion here.](#)



State Advocacy from the Physician Side

with Cheryl Tierney-Aves, MD, MPH

June 22, 8 pm ET / 5 pm PT

Join a discussion with about how to be an effective healthcare advocate in your local state legislature. Cheryl Tierney-Aves, MD, MPH is a Board-Certified behavior and developmental pediatrician who has completed Fellowships in Health Services Research, where she received her MPH at Harvard School of Public Health as well as Behavior and Developmental Pediatrics in 2002. Dr. Tierney-Aves is a Professor of Pediatrics in the Department of Developmental Medicine. She is an active member of The Society for Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics (SDBP) including its Advocacy Committee. Dr. Tierney is the President and founder of the ABA in PA Initiative and PA for ABA, Inc. whose missions are to improve access and quality of ABA services in Pennsylvania through grass roots and legislative advocacy efforts.

[Register for the discussion with Dr. Cheryl Tierney here.](#)

State Advocacy from the Legislator Side

with PA State Representative Brian Sims

June 28, 8 pm ET / 5 pm PT

Join a discussion with Pennsylvania State Representative Brian Sims about how to be an effective healthcare advocate in your local state legislature. Rep. Sims has been credited with successfully lobbying U.S. Senators Bob Casey (D-Pa.) and Pat Toomey (R-Pa.) to publicly support marriage equality and the LGBT-inclusive Employment Nondiscrimination Act (ENDA), respectively. He serves on the GLSEN Sports Advisory Council, the GO! Athletes Advisory Board, and the Campus Pride Board of Directors. In addition to various local and regional awards and honors, Rep. Sims is the recipient of the 2014 National Champion of Choice Award from NARAL Pro-Choice America, and the American Bar Association Commission on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity's national Stonewall Award.

[Register for the discussion with Representative Sims here.](#)



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Action 2

We have compiled the following **RESOURCES** for your reference:

Learn

- Find out if your state has any anti-transgender legislation:
[ACLU's List of Legislation Affecting LGBT Rights Across the Country](#)
- Tracker for anti-transgender legislation:
[Freedom for all Americans Legislative Tracker: Anti-Transgender Legislation](#)

Act

- Get involved in the local state legislature, let your voice be heard.
- Contact your state legislators and representatives [here](#).
 - Contact and tell them you are opposed to rolling back the rights of any transgender Americans.
 - By acting directly with state representatives your voice will make a greater impact as their opinions are more likely to sway with increased constituent feedback.

Donate

This is a list of several organizations fighting anti-transgender legislation, this list is a good starting point to donate to, and consider doing local fundraising efforts for:

- [The Trans Justice Funding Project](#)
- [The Trevor Project](#)
- [Human Rights Campaign](#)
- [Trans Women of Color Collective](#)
- [Gender Spectrum](#)
- [The Gay-Straight Alliance Network](#)
- [National Center for Transgender Equality](#)
- [Transgender Legal Defense and Education Fund](#)
- [Trans Lifeline](#)
- [The Sylvia Rivera Law Project](#) or [Marsha P. Johnson Institute](#)
- [Transgender Law Center](#)
- [GLSEN](#)
- [Trans Student Educational Resources](#)
- [The Okra Project](#)
- [For the Gworls](#)

Sincerely,

The Medical Student Pride Alliance National Leadership Team



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3. USTS-Full-Report-Dec17.pdf. Accessed May 22, 2021. <https://transequality.org/sites/default/files/docs/usts/USTS-Full-Report-Dec17.pdf>
4. NIMH » Suicide. Accessed May 22, 2021. <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/statistics/suicide>
5. American Psychological Association. Guidelines for psychological practice with transgender and gender nonconforming people. *Am Psychol*. 2015;70(9):832-864. doi:10.1037/a0039906
6. Hembree WC, Cohen-Kettenis PT, Gooren L, et al. Endocrine Treatment of Gender-Dysphoric/Gender-Incongruent Persons: An Endocrine Society* Clinical Practice Guideline. *J Clin Endocrinol Metab*. 2017;102(11):3869-3903. doi:10.1210/jc.2017-01658
7. AAMC Statement on Gender-affirming Health Care for Transgender Youth. AAMC. Accessed May 22, 2021. <https://www.aamc.org/news-insights/press-releases/aamc-statement-gender-affirming-health-care-transgender-youth>