

October 30, 2024

National Statement in Support of Full and Equal Access for the Transgender Community from Anti-Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Organizations

We, the undersigned anti-sexual assault and domestic violence organizations unequivocally support laws and policies that protect transgender people from violence and discrimination. This includes laws and policies that protect transgender children's and adults' ability to access restrooms, locker rooms, domestic violence shelters, rape crisis centers, and other facilities that match their affirmed gender.

Unfortunately, states across the country have introduced or adopted dangerous policies that seek to erode non-discrimination protections and exclude transgender, nonbinary, and intersex people from sex-separated public spaces. Legislative proposals have also sought to ban trans, nonbinary, and intersex survivors from critical services and safe spaces while escaping violence. Supporters of these anti-trans policies claim that they are necessary for public safety and to prevent sexual violence against women and children. As sexual assault service providers, domestic violence shelters, and other service providers and advocates who work each and every day to meet the needs of all survivors and reduce sexual assault and domestic violence throughout society, we speak from experience and expertise, and we strongly disagree.

Claims that allowing transgender people to access sex-separated spaces aligning with their gender identity threatens the safety or privacy of women and girls are false. We call on policy makers to focus on and fully fund survivors' real needs: housing, healthcare, advocacy, legal support, counseling, children's services, and more and to oppose harmful and false narratives about trans people and nonbinary people and survivors.

Transgender and nonbinary individuals already suffer higher risks of domestic violence and sexual assault resulting from discrimination, stigma, and barriers to financial and housing security they endure. Transgender women of color are disproportionately impacted. Prohibiting transgender and nonbinary people from facilities consistent with their affirmed gender further increases their vulnerability to assault and abuse.

As advocates committed to ending sexual assault and domestic violence, we do not support any law or policy that could place any person at greater risk for assault or abuse. That is why we strongly support transgender-inclusive nondiscrimination laws and policies—and why we oppose any law that jeopardizes the safety of transgender people.

Nondiscrimination laws protecting transgender people have existed for almost fifty years. Over 200 municipalities and 18 states have nondiscrimination laws protecting transgender people's access to facilities consistent with their affirmed gender. These laws have protected transgender and nonbinary people from discrimination without any evidence that they jeopardize others' safety. No jurisdiction has seen a rise in sexual violence or other public safety issues due to nondiscrimination laws that prohibit discrimination against transgender and nonbinary people and ensure them access to sex-separated spaces consistent with their gender identity.

In contrast, research shows anti-transgender rhetoric and policies are linked to an increased risk of sexual assault of trans and nonbinary youth, with one study showing that trans and nonbinary students who were forced to use a bathroom or locker room that did not match their affirmed identity were more likely to report sexual assault. And, anti-trans policies have resulted in more women and girls being questioned generally in public spaces for any deviation from sexist stereotypes. For example, local vigilantes accosted Aimee Toms while using the women's restroom at a Danbury, Connecticut, Walmart shortly after she donated her long hair to a charity that makes hair units for child cancer patients. The vigilantes argued Ms. Toms was prohibited from using the bathroom because she had short hair. Additionally, a twenty-four year old woman was berated and threatened while using a restroom at Rampart Casino in Las Vegas, Nevada because she had a buzz cut. Another woman was followed into the bathroom by a man at a Dallas hospital who "wanted to make sure she was going to the right [bathroom]" because she was wearing basketball shorts and a t-shirt. These women's horrific experiences exemplify why anti-transgender policies threaten all women and girls and encourage people to question others' gender because they may not conform to sex stereotypes.

Moreover, assaulting another person in a restroom or changing room remains against the law in every single state. We operate and advocate for rape crisis centers and shelters all over the country, including in cities and states with nondiscrimination protections for transgender people. Those protections neither weaken public safety or undermine criminal laws, nor have they compromised their enforcement.

Discriminating against transgender people threatens everyone's autonomy over their body and their safety. Those who perpetuate falsehoods about transgender people and nondiscrimination laws are endangering all people, making no one safer. We cannot be silent while survivors, those who are transgender and those who are not, are harmed by these laws. We will only accomplish our goal of ending sexual assault and domestic violence by treating all people, including those who are transgender, with fairness and respect, regardless of their gender identify.

Respectfully submitted,

(list in formation)

Americans for Democratic Action (ADA)
API Chaya
Arizona Coalition to End Sexual & Domestic Violence
Asian/Pacific Islander Domestic Violence Resource Project
Asian Americans for Community Involvement (AACI)
Asian Pacific Institute on Gender-Based Violence
ASISTA Immigrant Assistance
Aspen Victim Advocacy Services
ASTOP, Inc. Sexual Abuse Center
BeLEAF Survivors
Beyond Harm
Beyond Survival
Black Woman Sanctuary
Black Women's Blueprint
Bradley Angle
Bridges: Domestic & Sexual Violence Support Services, Inc.
California Partnership to End Domestic Violence
Call to Safety
Caminar Latino-Latinos United for Peace and Equity
Canyon Creek Services
Catalyst
Cia Siab, Inc.
Cleveland Rape Crisis Center
Coalition on Human Needs
Colorado Coalition Against Sexual Assault
Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence
Conneticut Alliance to End Sexual Violence

Crime Victim Services
DC Coalition Against Domestic Violence
Deaf Unity
Delaware Coalition Against Domestic Violence
District of Columbia Rape Crisis Center
Diverse & Resilient
Domestic Violence Services of Sno. Co.
Dove House Advocacy Services
El Programa Hispano Catolico_UNICA
Embrace Services, Inc.
Empowerhouse
End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin
Esperanza United
Family Advocates
Family Violence Appellate Project
Fight Against Domestic Violence
Florida Council Against Sexual Violence
FORGE, Inc.
Freedom, Inc.
FRIENDS, Inc.
Futures Without Violence
Gender Justice League
Georgia Coalition Against Domestic Violence
HAVEN, Inc.
Hawai'i State Coalition Against Domestic Violence
Healthy Alternatives to Violent Environments
Her Justice
Hope and Healing Survivor Resource Center
Idaho Coalition Against Sexual & Domestic Violence
Illinois Accountability Initiative
Illinois Coalition Against Domestic Violence
Illinois Coalition Against Sexual Assault
Iowa Coalition Against Domestic Violence
JDI (Jane Doe, Inc.) MA Coalition Against SA & DV
Jewish Family Services, Inc.
Jewish Women International
Journey Center for Safety & Healing
Just Detention International
Just Solutions
Kansas Coalition Against Sexual & Domestic Violence

King County Sexual Assault Resource Center
Lassen Family Services
Legal Momentum
Little Listeners Of The Carolina
Live Violence Free
Los Angeles LGBT Center
Louisiana Foundation Against Sexual Assault (LaFASA)
Lovelace Consulting Services, Inc.
Lumina Alliance
Lutheran Community Services Northwest
Maine Coalition Against Sexual Assault
Maitri
Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault
Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence, Inc.
Michigan Coalition to End Domestic & Sexual Violence
Minnesota Coalition Against Sexual Assault
Minnesota Indian Women's Sexual Assault Coalition
Modoc Crisis Center
Montana Coalition Against Domestic & Sexual Violence
Naila Amin Foundation
National Alliance to End Sexual Violence
National Council of Jewish Women - Greater Philadelphia
National Indigenous Women's Resource Center
National LGBTQ Institute on IPV
National Network To End Domestic Violence
National Resource Center on Domestic Violence
Nebraska Coalition to End Sexual & Domestic Violence
Nebraska Tribes Addressing Violence Coalition
Nevada Coalition to End Domestic and Sexual Violence
New Avenues for Youth
New Mexico Coalition Against Domestic Violence
New Mexico Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs
New York State Coalition Against Domestic Violence
Oasis Youth Center
Ohio Alliance to End Sexual Violence
Ohio Domestic Violence Network
Oregon Coalition Against Domestic & Sexual Violence
Oregonizers
Oregon Sexual Assault Task Force
Pathways for Change, Inc. Rape Crisis Center

Peace House, Inc.
Peace Over Violence
Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence
Pennsylvania Coalition to Advance Respect
People Power United
Project Sister Family Services
Raksha, Inc.
Rape Recovery Center
Rape Trauma Services: A Center for Healing & Violence Prevention
Raphael House of Portland
Raven, Lotus & Grey
Reach Counseling
Rebuilding Hope Sexual Assault Center
Respect Together
Rhode Island Coalition Against Domestic Violence
Safe Haven of Greater Waterbury, Inc.
Seekhaven Family Crisis & Resource Center
Sexual Violence Prevention Association (SVPA)
Stand Up Placer, Inc.
Stepping Stones, Inc.
Support, Advocacy & Resource Center
Tahirih Justice Center
Tennessee Coalition to End Domestic & Sexual Violence
Texas Council on Family Violence
The Center for Empowerment & Education
The Center for Family Justice
The Cocoon
The DC LGBTQ+ Community Center | The DC Anti-Violence Project
The Domestic Violence Shelter
The DOVE Project
The National Domestic Violence Hotline
The SAFE Alliance
Townhall II
Transformation Project Advocacy Network
Tri-County Help Center, Inc.
Turning Point, Inc.
Ujima, The National Center on Violence Against Women in the Black Community
Upper Ohio Valley Sexual Assault Help Center, Inc.
Utah Domestic Violence Coalition
VALOR

Verity
Vermont Network Against Domestic & Sexual Violence
Violence Free Colorado
Violence Free Minnesota
Virginia Sexual & Domestic Violence Action Alliance
Volunteers of America Oregon - Home Free
WEAVE
West Virginia Coalition Against Domestic Violence
William E. Morris Institute for Justice
Wisconsin Coalition Against Sexual Assault
WOAR-Philadelphia Center Against Sexual Violence
Women's Resource Center
Women & Children's Horizons
WZA Consultant
YWCA Golden Gate Silicon Valley
YWCA New Britain
YWCA Yakima
ZeroV