

VOTE NO ON ANTI-TRANS BALLOT MEASURES

Attacks on Trans People are a Danger to All Children



There are two regressive initiatives on the ballot that could harm vulnerable youth in Washington State this November. One, IL26-001, is deceptively titled “**Concerns parental rights relating to their children in public schools,**” or the “Restoring the Parents Bill of Rights Act.” The other, IL26-638, is titled “**Concerns participation in athletics at K-12 schools,**” or “Defending Equity in Interscholastic Sports Act,” also deceptive. Both impact LGBTQ kids and children who are vulnerable to abuse. Both resort to bad faith fear mongering that will have a terrible effect on girls and gender non-conforming kids in K-12 who want to participate in sports. Both are poorly written and intentionally vague laws that claim to protect children. Both will actually put them in harm's way and magnify ongoing harm.

Anti-trans bigotry in the U.S. and internationally has been backed by billionaires such as J.K. Rowling and Elon Musk. Here in Washington **right-wing MAGA billionaire** Brian Heywood (Let's Go Washington PAC) has spent millions of dollars from his personal fortune pushing these initiatives. Heywood is also behind Initiative 645, an effort to repeal the millionaire tax. This would take away

desperately needed funding from schools, childcare, healthcare, social services and more. All of these ballot measures have turned Washington into the latest battleground over the conservative agenda.

Harming kids under the guise of parents' rights

The IL26-001 “Restoring the Parents’ Bill of Rights” measure endangers already at-risk children by allowing parents or guardians, including those charged with abuse, to access social work and counseling records that were previously off limits. This could expose already vulnerable children, including children who are queer or questioning their sexual or gender identity, to mistreatment at home.

This measure eliminates an existing requirement that parents be immediately notified if their child is a victim of bullying or intimidation at school. It also removes anti-discrimination language for sex, race, creed, religion, color, national origin, gender identity, and various disabilities from a consolidated state statute. While these categories would still be disbursed over other state laws, that would make filing complaints based on these protected classes more difficult.

Keep trans kids in sports! Hands off girls' bodies!

IL26-638 or "Defending Equity in Interscholastic Sports Act" is an assault on federal Title IX protection of equal athletic opportunity in youth sports. This ballot measure not only excludes trans girls and gender-nonconforming children from sports participation but creates other barriers as well. Mandatory gender verification, including the possibility of genital exams for girls only, violates children's bodily autonomy and would discourage girls from getting involved in sports.

According to the Washington Interscholastic Activities Association (WIAA), there are approximately 10 transgender middle and high school athletes competing in school sports out of 200,000 total across the state. The right wing is creating a problem that doesn't even exist. And regardless, all kids should have access to the benefits of playing sports.

The Democrat-led Washington state legislature had the opportunity to reject this measure in the last legislative session when it was filed with the Secretary of State's office. Instead of taking a clear stand for trans youth and girls' sports, they avoided the issue and passed it on to the voters.

Anti-trans baiting in sports and beyond

Children of color are also likely to be the most impacted by these anti-trans measures. An example is sister tennis stars Serena and Venus Williams, who have been accused of being trans. At the 2024 summer Olympics two female boxers, Imane Khelif of Algeria and Lin Yu-Ting of Taiwan, became targets of anti-trans hysteria even after they "passed" gender exams. These are just two instances of women athletes of color being perceived as too "masculine."

The assault on trans rights has been increasing nationwide, and Washington is one of 42 states where anti-trans laws have been proposed. The right wing's claim that they are protecting women and girls is false. They are actually working to undermine girls' sports with these initiatives. The right wing is also attempting to undermine feminism by creating divisions between cis and trans women. We cannot let this legislation pass in Washington state.

The good news is that there is ongoing organizing against these regressive measures. They are opposed by doctors, nurses, domestic violence prevention groups, Planned Parenthood, the League of Women Voters, and the Washington State Nurses Association. No Hate in WA State is organizing the campaign against the initiatives and has been endorsed by numerous organizations including Radical Women, the Freedom Socialist Party, and government agencies, as well as labor, faith based, and various community organizations.

Fear mongering against trans people is a convenient scapegoating ploy used to distract working people from the financial hardships being imposed on them by increased costs of housing, healthcare, and fossil fuels. Enforcing strict binary gender assignment is also a way to reinforce traditional patriarchal gender roles that keep women exploited under capitalism. As with most regressive policies, these initiatives are about control, not safety.

Brian Heywood and Let's Go Washington are spending millions to mislead voters and hide the true impacts of their initiatives. We cannot let their extreme right-wing agenda win.

- **Vote No on initiatives IL26-001, IL26-638 and I-645**
- **End the attacks on trans youth**
- **Don't let billionaires decide children's rights**