



## PRESS RELEASE LGBT CAUCUS

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# The Oregon Legislature's LGBT Caucus Celebrates Pride Month and Progress Made

*Oregon has an unprecedented six state-elected officials who openly identify as LGBT. In honor of Pride Month, the Caucus reflects on the legislative strides made in support of Oregon's LGBTQIA2S+ communities.*

**SALEM, Ore.** — In honor of Pride Month, the Oregon Legislature's LGBT Caucus celebrates [LGBTQIA2S+](#) and queer communities by reflecting on past and present leaders, advocates, and legislative accomplishments.

Currently, Oregon has an unprecedented six state-elected officials who openly identify as LGBT. This Pride Month will also mark Governor Kate Brown's last as the nation's first elected open LGBT governor. Thanks to the communities that elect and fight for queer representation, Oregon has led the way to affirm and expand the rights of LGBTQIA2S+ Oregonians.

"To me Pride Month is about breaking down barriers, a big part of why I ran for office. Too many queer kids are dying by suicide, too many trans people are being assaulted and murdered, and too many queer people are still losing the roofs over their heads for simply being who they are," said [Representative Travis Nelson](#) (D-Portland), the first Black LGBT elected official to the Oregon Legislature. "I want an Oregon in which who you are or who you love aren't barriers to living your best life and achieving your dreams."

"At a time when the very right for LGBTQIA2S+ to openly exist is being attacked across the country, it is more important than ever for our caucus to fight fiercely and proudly every day in support of LGBTQIA2S+ rights," said [Senator Kate Lieber](#) (D-Beaverton). "This Pride month, I am as proud as ever to be a part of this resilient and beautiful community, and look forward to continuing to ensure that the rights and wellbeing of every LGBTQIA2S+ person, whether from our state or from any other, is fully protected and celebrated here in Oregon."

“Pride is always a time to think about how far we have come. If you look at the list of legislative accomplishments that we have, it is pretty impressive. But back in the 1990s and even in the 2000s it was not always that easy to pass bills that affirm and support our community,” said [Representative Rob Nosse](#) (D-Portland). “That said, the targeting of transgender people in our state and across the nation is a reminder of why Pride and coming out and being politically active is vital. If we want things to get better and to protect the gains we have made our community has to stay involved.”

### **Legislative Accomplishments**

Past legislation has included efforts to make it more accessible for transgender Oregonians to attain gender-affirming identity documents and healthcare coverage under the Oregon Health Plan. Legislation has also been passed to ban conversion therapy and expand Oregon’s hate crime and anti-discrimination laws to protect Oregon’s LGBTQIA2S+ community.

Additional accomplishments passed by the Legislature include:

- **Adi’s Act** ([SB 52](#)): Also known as Adi’s Act, SB 52 requires school districts to develop student suicide prevention plans. It also ensures equitable access for students identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, two-spirit, intersex, asexual, nonbinary or another marginalized gender identity or sexual orientation.
- **Every Student Belongs** ([HB 2697](#)): Inspired by the advocacy of Oregon high school students in 2020, the Every Student Belongs policy recognizes that student health and safety are the cornerstone of education and that all students are entitled to a high-quality educational experience, free from discrimination or harassment based on perceived race, color, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, or national origin, and without fear or hatred, racism or violence.
- **The Data Justice Act** ([HB 3159](#)): The Data Justice Act requires healthcare providers to collect sexual-orientation and gender-identity information from patients (with informed consent), and provides funding to Oregon Health Authority to develop a database that will provide unprecedented insight into LGBTQ+ health disparities. This dramatically expanded collection of data on health inequities related to race, ethnicity, preferred language, and disabilities.
- **Access to PrEP and PEP** ([HB 2958](#)): This bill allows pharmacists to prescribe and administer HIV/AIDS prevention drugs, making them more accessible for all Oregonians.
- **Senate Bill 704**: Prohibits the use of the “trans panic” or “gay panic” defense, which argues acts of violence are somehow mitigated by the victim’s gender identity or sexuality.
- **Resources for LGBTQIA2S+ Students** ([HB 5513](#)): This education funding bill provides resources to develop LGBTQIA2S+ student-specific supports.
- **The CROWN Act** ([HB 2935](#)): The CROWN Act, [in addition to protecting Black students and other students of color](#), also affirmatively impacts LGBTQIA2S+ student athletes who want their hair to align with their gender

expression. The Caucus recognizes and thanks Representative Janelle Bynum (D-Clackamas) for her leadership in passing this bill.

- **Gender Identity (HB 3041)**: This bill separates "gender identity" from the definition of "sexual orientation" in Oregon statute, and creates separate definition "gender identity." This recognizes that sexuality and gender are two separate things, and affirms anti-discrimination protections for transgender people.
- **\$15 Million Reproductive Health Equity Fund (HB 5202)**: The impact of overturning Roe will be felt largely by Black, Latiné, Indigenous, people of color and queer communities, low-income individuals and families, people with disabilities, rural areas, among other communities who face structural barriers. This \$15 million will address longstanding health disparities and ensure resources are available to those who may be impacted by the loss of federal abortion protections.

### **Celebrating Community Organizations and Leaders**

The Caucus commemorates the many LGBTQIA2S+ and QTBIPOC activists, advocates, and organizers like Marsha P. Johnson, Sylvia Rivera, Harvey Milk, Bayard Rustin, Larry Kramer, Kathleen Saadat, and other visionary leaders who carried us to this moment. The Caucus also celebrates our youth and student activists leading the way toward greater racial and gender justice and fighting for the right to live their lives authentically.

The Caucus further recognizes the integral work of community based organizations including Basic Rights Oregon, Cascade AIDS Project, the PDX Q Center, Black and Beyond the Binary, Oregon Alliance to Prevent Suicide, National LGBT Bar Association, the Human Rights Campaign, and the many other individuals and organizations who continue to fight for LGBTQIA2S+ rights amidst a wave of state legislation across the country seeking to reduce the civil rights of transgender, non-binary, and queer youth.

Now and in the future Oregon Democrats remain united and committed to passing legislation reflective of the lived experiences of all of our LGBTQIA2S+ communities.

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**Members of the Oregon Legislature's LGBT Caucus:** Representatives Travis Nelson, Karin Power, Dacia Grayber, Rob Nosse; Senator Kate Lieber