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IMPACT OF GENDER AFFIRMING CARE BANS ON LGBTQ+ ADULTS

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The LGBTQ+ community in the United States is living in a [national state of emergency](#). The 2023 legislative session saw more than 550 anti-LGBTQ+ bills introduced in 43 state houses across the country, with over 80 bills signed into law as of press time — making 2023 the worst year on record for anti-LGBTQ+ legislation. These bills attacked all aspects of LGBTQ+ daily life, with the vast majority — well over 200 — targeting transgender and non-binary people, and transgender and non-binary youth in particular.

In one of the most direct attacks on transgender and non-binary youth, [32 states introduced legislation, and 21 states passed or enacted](#) into law, legislation that bars or severely restricts access to gender-affirming care (GAC) for minors age 18 and younger. Collectively, these 21 states are home to nearly 97,000 transgender youth age 13-17—meaning that a third of all transgender youth in the United States currently live in states where they have lost access to gender-affirming care, or had their access severely limited (note that several of these bans have been temporarily enjoined by federal courts and are not currently in effect). In some states, the bans extend into adulthood. These bans deny transgender and non-binary young people access to [safe, age-appropriate, best practices medical care](#). Some of these laws also eliminated coverage for adults who are on Medicaid or who are government employees. Florida also implemented additional barriers to care, like preventing nurse practitioners from providing hormone prescriptions.

When anti-LGBTQ+ legislation is introduced, it not only aims to legislate LGBTQ+ people out of all spaces of daily life, it also codifies discrimination and stigma into law. As a result, in addition to directly interfering with the rights of parents and doctors to make the best choices for their children and patients, gender-affirming care bans, and anti-LGBTQ+ legislation in general, can have [disastrous effects on the safety, health, and well-being of LGBTQ+ people](#).

To understand the impact of gender-affirming care bans on the LGBTQ+ adult (age 18+) community, the Human Rights Campaign Foundation partnered with [Community Marketing & Insights \(CMI\)](#) to capture LGBTQ+ community attitudes towards gender-affirming care bans via CMI's 17th Annual LGBTQ+ Community Survey (full methodology explained below). Over 14,000 LGBTQ+ adults from all 50 states and Washington, DC completed the online survey in the Spring and Summer of 2023, while many of the gender-affirming care bans were signed into law or began to go into effect.

The results are striking, revealing that gender-affirming care bans don't just hurt transgender and non-binary young people. Instead, these bans are impacting the health and well-being of LGBTQ+ adults, and are driving people and families to make difficult choices over where to live, work, travel, and spend their money.



+ A plurality of LGBTQ+ adults — and the majority of transgender and non-binary adults — report that gender-affirming care bans directly impact their health or that of their loved ones.

- **4 in 10 (42.9%)** LGBTQ+ adults report that **gender-affirming care bans impact their physical and/or mental health, or that of their loved ones.**
- **8 in 10 (80.1%)** transgender and non-binary adults report the same.

LGBTQ+ adults in their own words

[These bans] make me, and other LGBTQ+ folks, have suicidal ideation because it makes us feel worthless

-Two-spirit transgender woman, 35-54 years old, Kentucky

This impacts my mental health but not physical health as I do not live in those states [with a gender-affirming care ban]. But it is very scary and causes stress and anxiety.

-Non-binary person, 18-34 years old, New York

These laws harm children, families, and people in general

-Cisgender lesbian woman, 55+ years old, North Carolina

These laws make it harder for young people, regardless of gender identity, to access medical and mental healthcare in general

-Non-binary person, 55+ years old, Texas

The rise in violet rhetoric from the right with regard to trans rights has very much negatively impacted my mental health

-Cisgender gay man, 35-54 years old, Illinois

These [bans] make me feel scared and hopeless about the future

-Genderqueer person, 18-34 years old, Arizona

+ The vast majority of LGBTQ+ adults—and transgender and non-binary adults in particular—feel their safety, and that of the LGBTQ+ community as a whole, is threatened by gender-affirming care bans.

- **8 in 10 (79.1%)** LGBTQ+ adults report that **gender-affirming care bans make them feel less safe** as an LGBTQ+ person, as do
 - » **Over 9 in 10 (94.0%)** transgender and non-binary adults
- **8 in 10 (80.5%)** LGBTQ+ adults feel that **gender-affirming care bans worsen harmful stereotypes, discrimination, hate, and stigma against the LGBTQ+ community, as do**
 - » **9 in 10 (89.7%)** transgender and non-binary adults



LGBTQ+ adults in their own words

I feel like I have less value or right to be here than my cisgender neighbors and community. I am now afraid of them, and the harm they might intend towards me.

-Transgender man, 18-34 years old, Idaho

I feel attacked, not understood, unseen, hated, and used like a political pawn.

-Cisgender gay man, 55+ years old, Nebraska

My home state, where I no longer live, is one of the states most affected by the wave of legislation. My community there is in so much pain, and it pains me very much that I may never be able to visit home again.

-Trans/non-binary man, 18-34 years old, Massachusetts

These laws are not passed in a vacuum, which scares me. If we allow the state to pass restrictions on one group, restrictions will expand to other groups as well, eventually restricting everyone's freedom.

-Cisgender lesbian woman, 55+ years old, Oregon

It makes me feel scared that so many people with power in this country can make people like me into atrocities that seem illegal

-Transgender man, 35-54 years old, Maine

The removal of laws and the new laws targeting the community makes me feel like we are absolutely moving in the wrong direction and should scare everyone, not just our community.

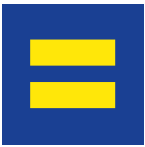
-Cisgender gay man, 35-54 years old, Missouri

+ And many LGBTQ+ adults are making decisions about where to live, work, travel, and spend money, based on the presence of gender-affirming care bans — highlighting how states with such laws are at risk of losing talent.

- **1 in 3 (34.1%)** LGBTQ+ adults report they **would move — or already have moved away/taken steps to move — from a state that passed or enacted a gender-affirming care ban**
 - » **1 in 5 (20.9%)** of LGBTQ+ adults in this group **would leave the country altogether** if their state and/or the country enacted a gender-affirming care ban — or already have taken steps to do so.
- **Over half (52.7%)** of transgender and non-binary adults nationwide **would move — or already have moved — from a state that passed or enacted a gender-affirming care ban.**
 - » **Almost half (45.4%)** of transgender and non-binary adults in this group would try to leave the country altogether.



- » **7 in 10 (70.5%)** of transgender and non-binary adults living in states that had passed or enacted a gender affirming care ban at the time of the survey wanted to move to a new state, or already had taken steps to do so.
- **Over a quarter (28.3%)** of LGBTQ+ adults would specifically **look to change jobs to a position located in a different state** if their state were to pass or enact a gender-affirming care ban.
 - » **Over 4 in 10 (41.8%)** transgender and non-binary adults would look for a new job in a state without a gender-affirming care ban, as would:
 - » **Over half (52.5%)** of transgender and non-binary adults living in states that had passed or enacted gender-affirming care bans.
- **Over 6 in 10 (62.2%)** LGBTQ+ adults would **refuse to move to, or attend school in another state** where a gender-affirming care ban was in place
 - » **Three-quarters (76.1%)** of transgender and non-binary adults report the same, including **over 8 in 10 (82.6%)** transgender and non-binary adults currently living in a state without a gender affirming care ban.
- **6.6%** of LGBTQ+ adults, and **7.9%** of transgender and non-binary adults, **wrote in additional responses** for how they would respond if gender-affirming care ban were to pass in their state—or how they were responding to currently enacted bans. Of this group
 - » **17.8%** LGBTQ+ adults, and **8.1% transgender and non-binary adults, would refuse to travel (for work or pleasure) to, or spend money in, states with a gender-affirming care ban** in place, and/or **would boycott companies based in such states, in protest of state restrictions.**
 - » **8.3%** LGBTQ+ adults, and **7.5%** transgender and non-binary adults, were committed to **staying in their state and fighting back against gender-affirming care bans, through voting out and speaking out against politicians** who enacted these bans.



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LGBTQ+ adults in their own words

We're sticking it out for now to try to fight for change but it's frightening. We don't want to leave our community here. However, we don't want to raise kids here.

-Cisgender queer/pansexual woman, 35-54 years old, Texas

My parents are beginning to age, and I will not be able to care for them in the state in which they live because my spouse and I (both trans) want to have children at that point, and if we were to move back to South Carolina we could lose them.

-Non-binary person, 18-34 years old, Michigan

I have friends with transgender youth who have moved, are moving, and are strongly considering moving due to these laws in my state.

-Cisgender gay man, 35-54 years old, Tennessee

We are moving because of this ban.

-Genderqueer person, 18-34 years old, Missouri

I would vote against anyone involved in passing this law and work to get it repealed.

-Cisgender gay man, 35-54 years old, Louisiana

I am committed to staying in Georgia to change the narrative

-Genderqueer person, 18-34 years old, Georgia

I'm actively looking for another country to move to in the event that anti LGBTQ+ forces begin restricting LGBTQ+ rights nationally.

-Cisgender gay man, 35-53 years old, Utah

I try to avoid any products/services that are headquartered in any state passing such laws.

-Cisgender lesbian woman, 55+ years old, Arkansas

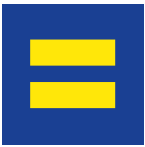


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State spotlights: Florida

Florida Governor Ron DeSantis has pushed an extremely anti-LGBTQ+ agenda over the last two years, prompting HRC to join Equality Florida this May in issuing a [travel advisory](#) that details risks associated with relocation or travel to the state. Now DeSantis is running for president and has threatened to bring his discriminatory policymaking to the national level. LGBTQ+ people and allies should pay close attention to the impact of DeSantis' agenda on his own constituents as he seeks a run for the nation's highest office.

- + **Over 4 in 10 (45.0%)** LGBTQ+ adults in Florida, and **8 in 10 (79.8%)** transgender and non-binary adults, report that **gender-affirming care bans impacted their physical and/or mental health, or that of their loved ones.**
- + **More than three-quarters (79.1%)** of LGBTQ+ adults in Florida, and over **9 in 10 (93.3%)** transgender and non-binary adults, report that **gender affirming care bans make them feel less safe** as a member of the LGBTQ+ community
- + **3 in 4 (76.4%)** LGBTQ+ adults in Florida, and **8 in 10 (80.1%)** transgender and non-binary adults, felt that **gender-affirming care bans worsen harmful stereotypes, discrimination, hate, and stigma** against the LGBTQ+ community.
- + **1 in 3 (36.3%)** LGBTQ+ Floridians report they want to move — or already have taken steps to move — away from Florida as a result of gender-affirming care bans.
 - **Over 4 in 10 (44.8%)** LGBTQ+ Floridians in this group **spoke of wanting to leave the country altogether**
- + **8 in 10 (80.7%)** of transgender and non-binary adults in Florida **want to move — or already have taken steps to move — away from Florida** as a result of gender-affirming care bans.
 - **8 in 10 (80.1%)** of transgender and non-binary adults in this group would try to leave the country altogether.
- + **More than 1 in 4 (28%)** LGBTQ+ Floridians wanted to **look for a new job in a different state** as a result of gender-affirming care bans in their state.
 - For transgender and non-binary Floridians, this increases to **more than half (51.9%)**, substantially and significantly more than transgender and non-binary adults living outside of Florida (41.3%).
- + **4 in 10 (44.2%)** LGBTQ+ Floridians, and **7 in 10 (69.4%)** of transgender and non-binary Floridians, would **refuse to move to, or attend school in another state** where a gender-affirming care ban was in place
- + **9.2%** of LGBTQ+ adults, and **11.1%** of transgender and non-binary adults, wrote in additional responses for how they were responding to currently enacted bans. Of this group
 - **11.7%** LGBTQ+ adults, and **6.5%** transgender and non-binary adults, were committed to **staying in their state and fighting back against gender-affirming care bans**, through **voting out and speaking out against politicians** who enacted these bans.



LGBTQ+ Floridians in their own words

As a trans non-binary person who lives in Florida, these anti-trans laws make me feel less safe in my community and make me fear for me, my partner, and our friends' safety. We will not move out of state and instead will stay and fight these injustices.

-Transgender/non-binary person, 18-34 years old

My family has lived in Florida since 1853. I have decided to stay and fight for now, but, may sadly decide to leave in the future.

-Cisgender gay man, 55+ years old

I am actively planning on putting my home on the market this summer and moving to a more inclusive state

-Transgender man, 55+ years old

I have lived in Florida for 5 years, I have plans to move out of state as soon as I retire.

-Cisgender lesbian woman, 55+ years old

I feel like I am losing my basic rights over my body and my right to exist in public spaces. I feel dehumanized.

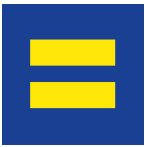
-Transmasculine/non-binary person, 18-34 years old

These laws are hateful and out right demoralizing. People are people, and they deserve respect, dignity, access to a life of freedom, and [to] be protected from hate, discrimination, and alienation.

-Cisgender gay man, 35-54 years old

I will probably never see my dad again as he lives in Florida where it is unsafe for me to be.

-Genderqueer/transgender man, 35-54 years old, currently living in Massachusetts



About the Survey

About the Data: Data comes from the 17th Annual LGBTQ+ Community Survey, fielded by Community Marketing Insights (and co-sponsored by the Human Rights Campaign Foundation and others). A total of 14,432 LGBTQ+ adults (age 18+) from all 50 states and Washington, DC. Data completed the online survey between April and June, 2023.

About the Sample: All respondents were recruited by CMI, through CMI's proprietary LGBTQ research panel, as well as their partnerships with over 100 LGBTQ media, events, and organizations. The original respondent pool is not fully representative of the "entire LGBTQ community," but instead reflects a market study on LGBTQ community members who interact with LGBTQ media and organizations.

About the Survey Weighting: In order to allow results to be nationally-representative of the U.S. LGBTQ+ adult population, HRC Foundation created population-based survey weights which approximate the age, race/ethnicity, and transgender identity of the LGBTQ+ adult population in the United State. These survey weights are not the same used by CMI, and thus results presented here may not replicate those presented elsewhere.

For age and race/ethnicity, current weights approximate the distribution of age and race/ethnicity as measured by the Williams Institute using data from the Gallup Survey in 2012-2017; for transgender identity, current weights approximate the percentage of the LGBTQ+ population that identifies as transgender and other gender-expansive/non-cisgender identities, as measured in the Gallup Survey in 2020 (the first year for which Gallup reported the distribution of sexual orientation and gender identity of LGBTQ+ adults). Weighted and unweighted distribution of the analysis sample is presented below.

	Unweighted 2023 LGBTQ+ Community Survey	HRC Weighted 2023 LGBTQ+ Community Survey	LGBTQ+ Adult Population
AGE			
18-24	2.0%	30.3%	30.0%
25-34	11.5%	26.3%	26.0%
35-49	19.6%	20.2%	20.0%
50-64	35.1%	16.2%	16.0%
65+	31.8%	7.1%	7.0%
RACE/ETHNICITY			
Hispanic /Latinx only	7.7%	21.0%	21.0%
Asian only, Non-Hispanic (NH)	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%
Black/African American Only, NH	4.0%	12.0%	12.0%
American Indian / Alaska Native only, NH	0.3%	1.0%	1.0%
Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander only, NH	0.3%	1.0%	1.0%
White only, NH	80.5%	58.0%	58.0%
More than one race, NH	5.2%	5.0%	5.0%
TRANSGENDER IDENTITY			
Cisgender	85.5%	88.7%	88.7%
Transgender, non-binary, and other non-cisgender identity	14.5%	11.3%	11.3%