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IDRA Stands in Solidarity with Transgender Youth

IDRA Statement of Support for Transgender Students after Callous Passage of Texas House Bill 25

(San Antonio • October 20, 2021) For months, hundreds of transgender students, teachers, parents, and allies rallied to protect the dignity of trans youth. This year, the Texas Legislature introduced over 75 anti-LGBTQ bills. Despite the passage of House Bill 25, which bars transgender youth in K-12 schools from participating in University Interscholastic League (UIL) sports aligned with their gender, we support and stand with trans youth across Texas.

Just hours after an 11-hour debate on the Texas House floor, the Texas Senate rushed a public hearing and voted on HB

HB 25 hurts trans students Texas policymakers should **STOP** harassing kids!

This year, Texas policymakers filed **>75** anti-LGBTQ bills.

Last year, Texas policymakers filed 19 anti-LGBTQ bills.



Let Kids Play
#ProtectTransKids



25, superseding a 24-hour rule that gives Texans more time to prepare public testimony. HB 25 is now headed to the Governor's desk for signature.

"The Texas Legislature's previous attempts to protect students against bullying ring hollow as this body now serves as the chief bully against Texas' trans students," said IDRA President & CEO Celina Moreno. "Discriminatory bills like these create unsafe school environments for trans students and all other gender non-conforming youth across our state."

HB 25 is not about athletics. It follows a series of coordinated attacks against LGBTQ communities across Texas, as the number of filed anti-LGBTQ bills increased by 294% since the 2019 legislative session. That same year, 59% of LGBTQ students nationwide reported experiencing discrimination through school policies and practices (Kosciw, et al., 2020).

Many trans students and their loved ones shared powerful testimony against HB 25 and similar proposals this fall. Trans students deserve to freely build on their strengths and passions, including sports. IDRA will continue collaborating with LGBTQ youth to create and sustain affirming spaces for their leadership to flourish. We support policies like a comprehensive non-discrimination bill that would protect LGBTQ youth and adults in Texas, and advocate for amending the Texas Education Code to employ more affirming, gender-inclusive language (Equality Texas, 2021).

"We will continue to love, protect, and fight for justice for trans youth and work with our partners toward a future when trans students' only extracurricular dilemma is simply choosing which ones bring them most joy," Ms. Moreno said. "It is shameful that anyone has to expend energy fighting against bills that violate their federal protections."

IDRA operates the [IDRA EAC-South](#), the largest of four federally-funded equity assistance centers under the 1964 *Civil Rights Act*. We provide training to schools across the U.S. South to ensure all students can learn free from discrimination, including discrimination based on gender. Through policy, practice and research, IDRA supports the important advocacy led by LGBTQ communities and is committed to building safe and welcoming school environments for all students.

Equality Texas. (2021). [2021 Equality Texas Legislative Agenda](#). Austin.

Kosciw, J.G., Clark, C.M., Truong, N.L., & Zongrone, A.D. (2020). [The 2019 National School Climate Survey – The Experiences of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Youth in Our Nation's Schools](#). New York.

NCTENGLT. (2010). [Findings of the National Transgender Discrimination Survey](#). National Center for Transgender Equality and National Gay and Lesbian Taskforce.

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IDRA is an independent, non-profit organization whose mission is to achieve equal educational opportunity through strong public schools that prepare all students to access and succeed in college.

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