

# Addressing Anti- LGBTGEQIAP+ Legislation: Practical Applications for Legislative Advocacy

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# Introduction

- Hi, I'm Gene!
  - Pronouns: they/them/theirs
  - Licensed Professional Counselor (OH)
  - Doctoral candidate at Ohio University
  - SAIGE Public Policy Committee Chairperson
  - SAIGE Ohio Southeast Representative & Government Relations Committee Liaison
  - Published on LGBTGEQIAP+ advocacy



The Public  
Policy  
Committee

Leo Khan-Snyder

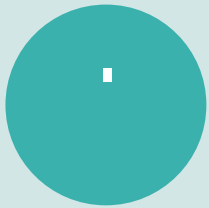
Brandon Tomlinson

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Aubrey Szalay

Tara Hill

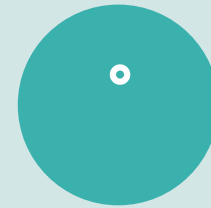
# Learning Objectives



Upon completion, participants will be able to articulate how bills generally move through committees and the legislature



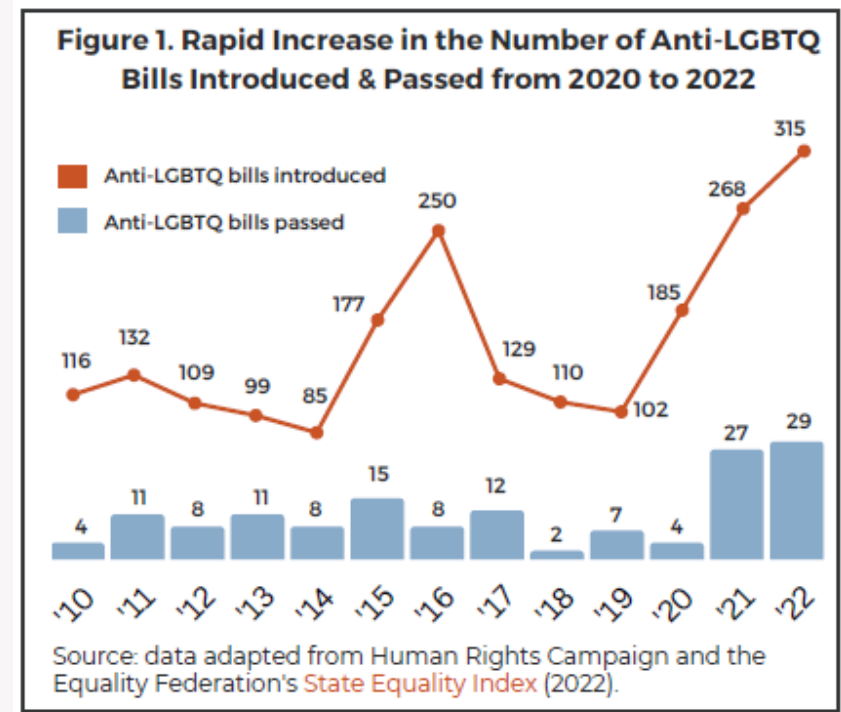
Upon completion, participants will understand the process to write, submit, and give committee testimony



Upon completion, participants will be able to write compelling and factual letters to legislators about anti-LGBTGEQIAP+ bills and laws

# Anti-LGBTQ+ Legislation: The Scope of the Problem

- As of February 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023, 340 anti-LGBTQ+ bills had at least been proposed in at the state level
  - More than 150 of those are specifically anti-trans
  - More bills have been proposed since
- This is a coordinated effort by conservative groups
  - Trump's presidency increased collaboration between anti-LGBTQ organizations, the far-right, and white supremacists

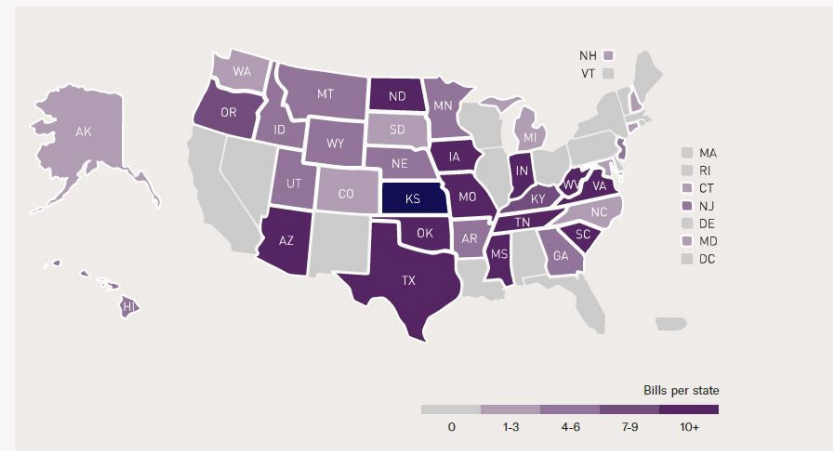
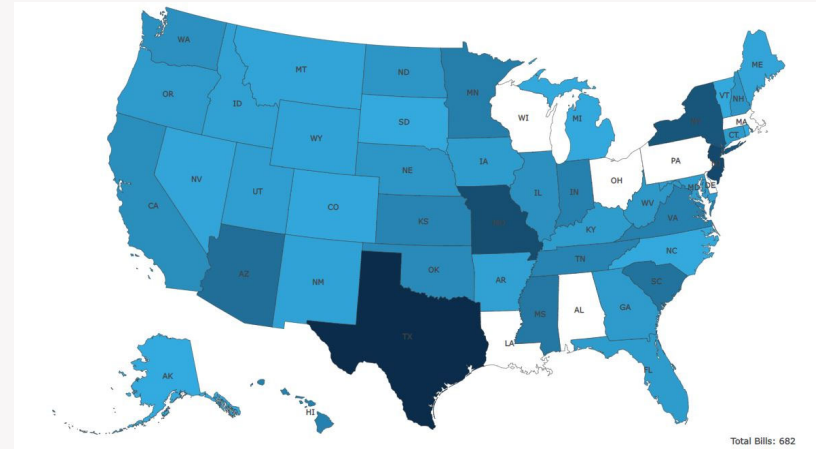


# Anti-LGBTGEQIAP Legislation: The Bills

- Limiting IDs
- Undermining nondiscrimination laws
- Restricting free speech & freedom of expression
- Limiting or banning certain types of healthcare
- Limiting public accommodations
- Censoring curriculum

# Anti-LGBTGEQIAP Legislation: Your State

- The legislative landscape can vary significantly from state to state
- Even the best resources can be out of date
- Each state's legislature should have a website that includes up to date information



# Anti-LGBTGEQIAP Legislation: Staying Informed

- Follow local news sources
  - Especially queer ones
- Follow legislators who are pro-LGBTQ+
  - They will often post about their opposition to anti-LGBTQ bills
- Follow queer and trans journalists and activists
- Follow local teaching unions
  - They're doing work on the education side of the anti-LGBTQ bills
- Follow your local and state level organizations
  - Counseling, MFTs, school counselors, social workers, psychologists, etc.



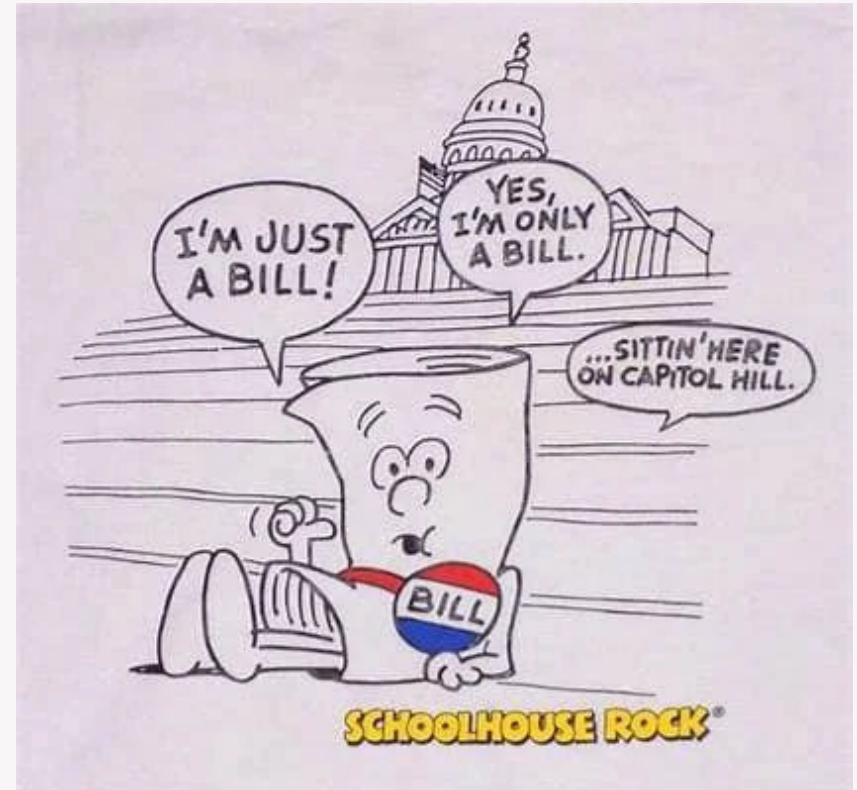


# Anti-LGBTGEQIAP Legislation: Finding Allies

- State counseling organizations
  - Examples: Ohio Counseling Association, ACA of Iowa, FALGBTIC, WASAIGE
  - Some state branches have lobbyists you may be able to access
  - Even if you can't get direct support from them, you can find like-minded folks
- Related professional organizations
  - Your state's NASW, School Psychologists Association, American Academy of Pediatrics
  - There are already people doing the work, you can join them
- Grassroot LGBTQ-led groups
  - You can't do good advocacy if you're not talking to the people impacted by it
- The Equality Federation, ACLU and HRC usually have state chapters

# How Bills Progress

1. Bill is introduced
2. Bill is assigned to a committee, debated, voted out to chamber
3. Bill is put before the chamber for a vote
4. If the bill passes one body, it moves to the next
5. Bill goes through the same process again & then concurrence, if passed
6. Governor/president signs or vetoes
7. If vetoed, it can be overridden in many cases



# Legislative Committees

- Committees have specific purposes (education, judiciary, finance, transportation)
  - A bill might not go to the committee you expect
  - A bill can go through more than one committee (or be introduced again to get a different committee)
  - The bill the house committee went through will not always match the senate committee
- In committee bills are discussed, researched, & edited/changed
- Most bills die in committee
- Most testimony for and against bills happens in committee
- Hearing days/times are usually listed publicly
  - They are often broken up between opponent and proponent

# Providing Testimony: So, You Want to Testify

- Witness form
  - Bill number
  - Types of testimony (verbal, written, both)
  - Testifying as (proponent, opponent, interested party)
  - Organization (not required)
  - Include your credentials with your name
- Your testimony should be submitted to the appropriate party (often the committee chair) by at least 5pm the day before (this can vary, sooner is better)

# Providing Testimony: What to Include

- Chairperson (last name), Vice Chair (last name), Ranking Member (last name), and all members of the (name of committee) thank you for the opportunity to testify in opposition to (bill name or number)
- Introduce yourself, use your credentials, location(s); organization if relevant
- State your position
  - If you are not opposed to the entire bill note that
- Quote or summarize the bill (use section numbers)
- Connect your points to mental health (don't step outside of your expertise); cite ethical codes & other organizations where needed
- If there has been proponent testimony, read it and address those points where possible
- Do not exceed 5 minutes

# Providing Testimony: The Big Day

- Practice your testimony
- Bring a water bottle and a snack
- Get there early
- Check in
- Dress professionally
- Pay attention
- If questions are asked, address the chair not the questioner
- Be polite
- Make friends with other witnesses
- Understand that you might not get to testify

# Providing Testimony: Shenanigans

- The meeting room/time might change
- Little notice might be given on the hearing day/time
- The amount of time they have for the hearing might change
- If many witnesses show up, time might be cut down for each witness
- A sub-bill might be introduced the evening before
  - You can change your testimony and resubmit it if needed in this case specifically (note this in your new testimony)
- The question(s) they ask you might not be relevant to your testimony, kindly call them out on it
  - If you don't know the answer, don't guess
- Stay safe

# Letter Writing

- [Please see Jordan's and Dr. Lawson's pdf in the google drive](#)
- When you introduce yourself emphasize where you are from
- Thank your lawmaker for something they have done
- Make your position clear
- Cite research (resources for this are in the drive)
- Not economic impact if relevant
- Anecdotes are powerful (don't violate confidentiality)
- Address opposing views where possible
  - Outsiders/outside groups
- Written letters sent in the mail make a bigger impact than emails



## Contact Me:

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- [@Advocacy\\_Praxis](#)

# References

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