**March 10, 2022**

# **MA State Commission Condemns TX Governor Abbott’s Attack on Transgender Children and Their Families, Calls on State Leaders to Take Immediate Action**

**Boston, MA —** The Massachusetts Commission on LGBTQ Youth unequivocally condemns Texas Governor Greg Abbott’s politically-motivated attack on transgender, non-binary, and gender-expansive children and their families. The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS), whose mission is “to protect the unprotected*,”* is being egregiously weaponized to tear families apart and deny young people across Texas access to [medically-recommended and life-saving](https://www.ama-assn.org/delivering-care/population-care/advocating-lgbtq-community) healthcare. Abbott’s heinous threat of removal of transgender youth from loving, supportive homes is causing irreversible damage to youth and families.

“In the face of state-sponsored division and family destruction from Texas, the Commission responds with state-sponsored love: the Commonwealth of Massachusetts stands now and always with transgender and non-binary youth and their supportive parents, caregivers and providers,” said Commission co-chair Roger Bourgeois. **“**It is unacceptable for state officials tasked with protecting constituents to target an already marginalized and vulnerable population under the pretense of concern for their well-being.”

The Commission calls upon all Massachusetts officials and entities to stand in solidarity with transgender youth and their caregivers, and to commit to taking significant, measurable, and meaningful actions to dismantle discrimination and inequity based on gender identity and sexual orientation.

This current wave of [anti-LGBTQ legislative activity in states across the nation is unprecedented](https://www.americanprogress.org/article/the-2022-legislative-landscape-for-lgbtqi-rights/). But the proliferation of bills targeting transgender youth is [particularly intense and rapidly accelerating](https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/2022/01/20/2022-anti-trans-legislation/6571819001/): 79 anti-transgender bills were filed in 2020, doubling in 2021 to 147 anti-transgender proposals, and doubling again to roughly 280 anti-transgender bills active in state legislatures this year. This record-breaking legislative onslaught - [including criminalization of healthcare, education, social supports and supportive parents and caregivers](https://freedomforallamericans.org/legislative-tracker/anti-transgender-legislation/) - constitutes an alarming attack against transgender youth based on [false premises contradicting evidence-based research and recommendations](https://www.hrc.org/press-releases/gender-affirming-care-setting-the-record-straight-as-extremist-politicians-in-texas-and-other-states-continue-doubling-down-on-attacking-trans-youth-2).

These widespread attacks are sending a terrible message to our transgender and nonbinary young people and [causing them serious harm](https://www.thetrevorproject.org/blog/new-poll-illustrates-the-impacts-of-social-political-issues-on-lgbtq-youth/). This harm exacerbates existing mental health challenges faced by transgender youth. Right here in Massachusetts, often seen as a leader in LGBTQ protections, a staggering [four in ten transgender students (38.2%) reported seriously considering suicide within the past year](https://www.mass.gov/doc/mclgbtqy-annual-recommendations-fy-2022/download).

“To all LGBTQ youth in Massachusetts, we say, ‘We see you! We love you!’ We welcome you to shine in all of your beauty and authenticity. We’ve got you!” said Commission co-chair Craig Martin. “In this moment, we must declare ‘Not here, not on our watch, not ever!’ and take concerted action against misinformation to ensure that we do not lose ground and that we continue to make progress toward a state where all youth can thrive.”

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*The* [Commission on LGBTQ Youth](https://mass.gov/cgly) *is established by law as an independent state agency to recommend and advocate to all branches of state government effective policies, programs and resources for LGBTQ youth to thrive. Founded in 1992 as the first body of its kind in the nation, the Commission has been advocating for LGBTQ youth wellbeing in and out of schools for 30 years.*

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