



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Trump Republicans Target Transgender Rights

FRESNO—Recently, the Trump administration announced that it plans to roll back protections for transgender people by tying gender identity to genitalia at birth. This is an attack aimed not only at reducing transgender protections but also at nullifying the very concept of transgender rights. Trump is deliberately inflaming his base’s fear of transgendered individuals in the hope of increasing right-wing voter turnout in the midterm elections.

The Trump administration’s Department of Health and Human Services has put forth a memo trying to establish a restrictive legal definition of sex under Title IX, the federal civil rights law that bans gender discrimination in education programs that receive government financial assistance. The agency’s proposed definition would define sex as either male or female, unchangeable, determined by the genitals that a person is born with. It calls for mandatory genetic testing as the final proof in any dispute.

This ham-fisted attempt to roll back Obama-era advances ignores gender entirely as a concept, relying on a restrictive definition of biological sex to deny transgender people civil rights protection.

“Trump’s ongoing demonization of anyone who doesn’t look like his base is appalling,” says Michael D. Evans, chair of the Fresno County Democratic Party. “Civil rights should apply to every resident of our nation.”

Researchers say gender identity comes from the brain, not the genitals, and denying that is an act with potentially deadly consequences. Distress over the mind-body mismatch can become especially intense around puberty, and the risk of suicide shoots up for young people in this situation.

Transgender young people have high rates of depression, anxiety, eating disorders, substance use, self-harm and suicide. These problems are alleviated by allowing individuals to be perceived as their true gender identity. It is a simple act that can ease a lot of pain.

“We must decide who we are as Americans,” said Evans. “Do we accept the discrimination and hate advocated by Trump and the radical right, or do we stand in solidarity for civility and respect for everyone in our country?”

Trump and his allies in Congress are just warming up, and if we want to stop these despicable policies from harming trans folk across the country, we need to vote for Democrats this election.

People have the power. Vote on Nov. 6.

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