



Written by [C. Mitchell Shaw](#) on July 1, 2016

## Texarkana Repeals Transgender Bathroom Ordinance

The issue of transgender access to bathrooms and locker rooms of the opposite sex — which came to the forefront of the public mind in April when Target announced its [new policy](#) — has been quietly incubating behind the scenes for longer than most Americans are aware. The battle has been brewing for many months in places as diverse as [Washington State](#) and Texarkana, Arkansas, as the radical Left has conspired to create this issue and introduce it by stealth and deception.



And while communities all over the country are waking up to find that this issue has moved into their cities, counties, and states, many are organizing efforts to defeat it and return sanity to their communities.

In a surprising vote, the people of Texarkana overwhelmingly repealed ordinance M-130, which made bathrooms fair game for any and all, regardless of their sex. The ordinance was passed in an emergency session of the Texarkana Board of Directors in January. Almost immediately, a grassroots effort to repeal was launched. *The New American* spoke with Steve Oglesby of [Repeal130](#) — an organization made up of a diverse group of Texarkanans — who told us that this ordinance was different from other ordinances in at least two important regards: It was passed amidst a flurry of deception, and it directly violated state law.

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“A FOIA [Freedom of Information Act] request revealed that they had planned this thing for — I think — about ten months,” Oglesby told *The New American*, adding, “On January 19th someone noticed it was on the agenda. So people looked and came and spoke out against it and they passed it anyway — unanimously.” While a unanimous vote on an issue this controversial would be strange all by itself, the manner in which the Board of Directors passed this particular ordinance is even more troubling. As Oglesby explained:

They did it in an emergency session. Normally what they do is that they’ll read the proposed ordinance and then tell the people that they’re going to read it again at the next meeting a couple weeks later and then read it again a third time. This time, though, they called it an emergency, read it three times in one night, and passed it unanimously. So they planned their emergency for ten months.”

And the ordinance — though clearly aimed at opening up all public bathrooms and locker rooms — never mentioned those facilities. In fact, when Repeal130 began its initiative to bring the ordinance up for a vote, the transgender lobby argued that it was not about bathrooms and those who wanted repeal were making much ado about nothing. As Oglesby told *The New American*, “The argument against repealing this ordinance — over and over and over — was that it’s not about bathrooms; bathrooms aren’t even mentioned in the ordinance. No, but ‘public accommodations’ [are mentioned] and that certainly includes bathrooms.”



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He went on to say that the ridiculousness of that argument was apparent and became even more so as the battle waged on:

And you'd think that argument would go away. We started immediately seeing news articles about guys in girl's bathrooms — video taping and peeping and things like that — girls that have been assaulted. We started seeing these things immediately. Those stories were already out there, but people started seeing more of them. And so, you'd think they'd quit saying it's not about bathrooms. And then of course [when the president issued his decree](#) that if schools did not allow transgender bathrooms and dressing rooms, they would lose their federal funding, that really made it obvious that it is about bathrooms. This ordinance was a stepping stone to that. And so, what they were saying — what the president's decree was saying — is that it is more important to let boys in girl's locker rooms than it was to have enough money to feed lunch to poor kids, because that's the money that would be withheld.

Oglesby also explained how the ordinance violated Arkansas state law:

The ordinance was in violation of Arkansas' Act 137 that — in an effort to promote uniformity — establishes protected classes in the state of Arkansas and says that no municipality may add to the list. With M-130, Texarkana did that anyway and added "sexual orientation" and "gender identity" to the list.

The state, which could have pushed back, largely ignored the infraction. The people of Texarkana decided to take the bull by the horns and fight for a repeal. Oglesby said it "requires collecting signatures from 15 percent of the people that voted in the last mayoral election" to get a repeal initiative on the ballot. That meant that the Repeal130 committee had to get 1,109 signatures. "They collected 2600 signatures. I think 2100 or 2200 — more than twice the amount required — were approved by the city as valid signatures," Oglesby said. So the city had no choice but to set an election and let the people vote on this issue.

The city set the election date for May 28 and it was an overwhelming success. With 4,285 people voting, the repeal passed by nearly 80 percent. The final vote was 3,401 to 881. Numbers that one-sided demonstrate two things beyond any reasonable doubt: The people of Texarkana do not want men using the intimate facilities of women, and the city's board of directors is hopelessly out of touch with the voters.

So, if the ordinance was that obviously unpopular, why did the Board pass it unanimously? To answer that question, follow the money. According to Oglesby, groups such as the Human Rights Campaign have been funneling "millions of dollars toward little towns like Texarkana, Arkansas to just shove these things through." He added, "There are a couple other places in Arkansas where they unsuccessfully challenged it and those ordinances are still in place."

In fact, the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) — which is not the same thing as the Human Rights Commission, though they are certainly on the same page — has committed "[\\$8.5 million to permanent campaigns in Mississippi, Alabama and Arkansas](#)," according to the organization's website. Much of that money is being spent [infiltrating churches](#) in an effort to change the doctrine — or at least the practice — of those churches in regard to men who "identify" as women and vice versa.

HRC's communications director told *Baptist Press* that his organization is making headway in its program:

We want to successfully engage a majority of Mississippians on the issue of LGBT equality. This



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suggests that the best way to do so is to speak — authentically and from the heart — in the context of faith. As this campaign has shown and will continue to show, we’re doing just that.

While HRC may be “doing just that” in some areas, Texarkana, Arkansas, is not one of those areas. Churches at both ends of the racial and political spectrum united to fight for the good and the right and created a landslide victory for the truth.

As dishonest politicians, susceptible church leaders, and unaccountable bureaucrats — funded by the deep pockets of the transgender lobby and its co-conspirators — push this type of policy all across the nation, it is good to see the effectiveness of grassroots campaigns and organizations fighting back. In Texarkana, the battle was won largely by a combination of a [Facebook page](#) with 794 likes, a few radio and newspaper ads, and 1,000 yard signs which read “Keep men out of our daughters’ bathrooms.”

It just goes to prove that when the grassroots are activated, good things — even seemingly impossible things — can happen. Encouraged by this victory, perhaps other communities — both in and out of Arkansas — will rally to push back against these policies that endanger women and children. God knows they need to.



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