



Written by [James Murphy](#) on June 28, 2024

Students in Ohio Must Use Bathrooms that Align With Their Biological Sex

On Wednesday, the Ohio House passed legislation that would require students to use bathrooms and locker rooms that correspond to their biological sex at birth. The legislation, House Bill 183, aka the Protect All Students Act, was tacked onto another bill that deals with Ohio's college-credit program.

Two Republicans crossed the aisle and voted "no" on the [bill](#), along with every Democrat. Republicans Jamie Callender and Gayle Manning voted with Democrats, but the bill still passed by a 60-31 margin. The bill covers kindergarten through college.



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The late-night vote came after a marathon session that occurred just prior to lawmakers leaving for the summer. The Senate must approve the changes to the bill prior to sending it to the governor's desk for his signature. The legislation could potentially languish until after the November election.

Critics of the legislation claimed it was another attempt to foist outdated morality on the LGBT community. Representative Beth Liston, a Democrat, claimed that the legislation was unnecessary and insulting to women.

"I didn't anticipate we would be using the power of the state to bully transgender children and individuals today," Liston complained. "As far as protecting girls and women, I will tell you as a woman, I do not want nor need your protection."

Other opponents of the legislation included the Buckeye State's chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), which vowed to oppose the bill. They were further upset by the fact that the bill was passed during "Pride Month."

"Legislators have no business telling trans or gender-nonconforming young people what restrooms or locker rooms to use," Ohio's ACLU [posted](#) on X. "This is another state-sponsored attack against LGBTQ communities during #PrideMonth. This bill is not yet law — we will keep fighting."

Parents of transgender students worry that the bill unfairly targets their children and lead to an unsafe learning environment for them.

"I worry about the safety of my kids every day," said Sam Shim, the parent of two transgender teens. "Kids like my own are going to be targeted even more so and they're going to be alienated."

"My kids will feel even less safe in our school building and in the bathrooms too," Shim added. "It doesn't just affect the bathroom, it affects the climate at schools."

Proponents of the bill argued that Ohio's schools needed clarity on the issue and that the add-on



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legislation would protect children who might be uncomfortable using the bathroom or locker room with students of the opposite sex.

“Superintendents and school boards need clarity on this issue,” said Republican State Representative Adam Bird.

“The bottom line of this legislation is to protect students. I don’t see that as a controversial issue,” said Bird, a co-sponsor of the legislation. “Many Ohioans don’t want their local schools to allow the opposite sex into a restroom or locker room. The Protect All Students Act will eliminate difficult situations for school leaders and will create consistent policies across the state.”

Republican Beth Lear, another co-sponsor of the bill, [agreed](#).

“We are grateful to the House Higher Education Committee for doing what is right and what is best for all Ohio students in Kindergarten through college,” Lear said. “The Protect All Students Act, originally drafted by former State Representative Kris Jordan, will keep our children safe from exposure to the opposite sex while in private spaces like restrooms, locker rooms, and overnight accommodations.”

A House panel approved House Bill 183 in April, but House Speaker Jason Stephens, a Republican, never brought it for a vote as a stand-alone bill.

Ohio is one of 22 states that currently forbids “gender reassignment” surgery for children, as well as the hormone treatments associated with “gender affirming” care. Republican Governor Mike DeWine vetoed that ban, but was [overridden](#) by both the state’s House and the Senate. Ohio has also banned allowing biological males who from competing in sporting events as females.



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