



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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PHOENIX PRIDE STATEMENT REGARDING

ACTIONS BY THE ARIZONA LEGISLATURE

PHOENIX — **Phoenix Pride** has issued the following statement in response to the passage of Senate Bills 1138 and 1165 by the Arizona House of Representatives, earlier today:

“As a community, we are shocked and absolutely appalled at the actions passed today by the Arizona Legislature in an ongoing effort to further marginalize our state’s transgender population, by stripping the rights of individuals to live as themselves and embrace their true self-defined identity.

“These actions are particularly toxic as they target trans youth, a population already well known to be at far greater risk of suicide and other modes of self-harm than members of other adolescent demographics.

“The effort to prevent equitable participation in public school athletics is just one example of our legislature’s tremendous overreach in this two-part brazen attempt to strip the humanity from transgender children. In its 2020 opinion in *Bostock v. Clayton County* authored by Justice Neil Gorsuch, the U.S. Supreme Court made clear that the federal civil rights protections afforded by law on the

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basis of 'sex' include the recognition of sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression. We believe that this ruling renders SB 1165 unconstitutional on its face, further stressing the fact that the aim of this action is to harm defenseless children, rather than to produce any meaningful benefit for our state or its residents.

“The affront to the transgender community, and particularly transgender youth, is even more pronounced with SB 1138, which seeks to interfere with medical practitioners who are grounded in clinical science, when counseling or treating transgender patients who are under 18 years of age. By denying transgender youth the ability to seek the necessary medical treatment to conform with their genuine identity, Arizona lawmakers are taking steps to deny humanity, dignity and the very essence of self, to children who are doing nothing more than seeking to live as themselves. Scientific bodies, including the American Medical Association, have endorsed gender-affirming procedures as mentally and physically sound treatments, and for members of the Arizona Legislature to deny science for the sole sake of bigotry is inexcusable, in this or any matter.

“We call on Gov. Doug Ducey to veto these toxic, detestable and outright evil measures, and to do so in a manner that both condemns these particular proposals, and discourages future attempts to curtail the rights of transgender Arizonans who are our family and friends, neighbors and teammates, fellow students and fellow human beings.

“There is no place in American democracy for vicious attempts to marginalize and dehumanize anyone, especially innocent children.”

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ABOUT PHOENIX PRIDE

Phoenix Pride is the producer of the two largest annual public LGBTQ+ community events in Arizona: the Phoenix Pride Festival and Parade, and the Rainbows Festival. Founded in 1981, the organization engages year-round in its mission to unite, educate and engage people to support and empower the LGBTQ+ community and its allies. Additional information regarding Phoenix Pride is available online at the agency's website, <http://www.phoenixpride.org>.