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SOON STAGE

THE MUCH-ANTICIPATED
LUNA DEL LAGO MUSIC FESTIVAL
HAS ARRIVED.

By Jennifer Goldberg



'Loud and Clear'

Gov. Katie Hobbs becomes first Arizona governor to speak at Phoenix Pride.

BY MATT HENNIE

Gov. Katie Hobbs celebrated Pride on Oct. 21 with thousands of people in Steele Indian School Park, becoming the first governor in Arizona history to appear at the LGBTQ+ festival.

It also marked a homecoming of sorts for the former social worker and Democratic state lawmaker. Hobbs, while minority leader in the Arizona State Senate, worked as the community outreach and support services manager for Phoenix Pride, the nonprofit that organizes the two-day festival.

"It's been a long time since you've had an ally to the LGBTQ+ community in the state's highest office," Hobbs told the crowd. "So let me say this loudly, clearly, unequivocally: With me as your governor, you don't just have an ally, you have a champion."

During the legislative session earlier this year, Hobbs served as a bulkhead against Republicans trying to criminalize drag queens, ostracize transgender people and target LGBTQ+ issues. At least five anti-LGBTQ+ bills were among the record 142 vetoes Hobbs issued this year.

Hobbs said that her work with Phoenix Pride — along with volunteering at One•N•Ten, which supports LGBTQ+ youth — helped empower her as the state's first Democratic governor since 2009.

"I carry these experiences with me every single day, and they are front of mind whenever out of touch, hate-filled politicians try to come for your rights. I didn't become governor to break veto records, but I was proud to stand strong against hateful legislation that sadly made it to my desk this past legislative session," Hobbs told the crowd.

The governor also mocked the efforts of Republican lawmakers who are trying to ban drag shows in the state.

"These failed attempts to out trans and nonbinary youth, endanger the lives of every LGBTQ+ individual and suppress freedom of expression by banning drag shows tell me two things: One, these people don't know how to have any fun. And two, they are very unserious about addressing the real issues that face Arizona," Hobbs said.

Hobbs also pointed to proactive measures she's backed, despite a Republican-controlled legislature. Since taking office, Hobbs has signed three executive orders concerning LGBTQ+ issues.

On Jan. 2, her first day in office, Hobbs signed an order protecting LGBTQ+ employees at state agencies and companies with state contracts. On June 27, as many cities in the U.S. celebrated Pride, Hobbs signed two executive orders: 2023-12 affirms access to state employees for gender-affirming health care, and 2023-13 bans state agencies from promoting the use of conversion therapy, which is a medically debunked effort to change a person's sexual orientation.

In early June, she draped four Pride flags around the Executive Tower.

"I will continue to make sure that our LGBTQ+ public servants are able to live their lives as their true selves. And I will also continue to use my platform to make it clear that Arizona is a place where all should feel welcome," Hobbs said.

Gallego: 'Still work to be done' on LGBTQ+ issues

The governor's appearance came a few hours after two other high-profile Arizona Democrats spoke at the event. Arizona Secretary of State Adrian Fontes sang



happy birthday to Mayor Kate Gallego. The mayor also welcomed festivalgoers and shared a city proclamation declaring the weekend "Phoenix Pride Festival Days."

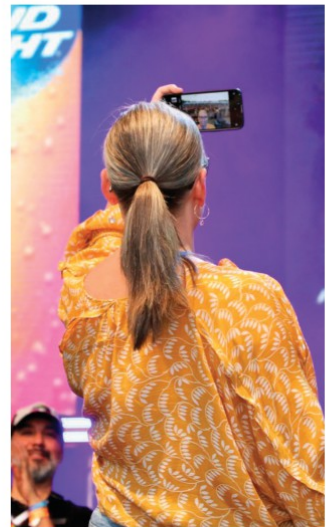
"There is still work to be done to safeguard LGBTQ+ rights so that marginalized communities can continue to thrive in Phoenix. We must work together to build a future that is safe for everyone," the proclamation read.

Hobbs urged attendees to enjoy the weekend celebration before taking a selfie from the stage with the crowd behind her.

"I am looking forward to continuing to work with all of you to build an Arizona for everyone, an Arizona where everyone — no matter who you love or who you are — has the safety, freedom and opportunity to truly live your authentic lives," Hobbs said.

Hobbs and Phoenix Pride officials confirmed that she's the first sitting Arizona governor to address the festival. LGBTQ+ activists held the city's first Pride march in 1981. A decade later, in 1991, a group of volunteers organized the annual Pride festival and started the organization that later became the nonprofit host of the event, according to Phoenix Pride.

In October 2022, Gallego was joined by Hobbs and Fontes — both candidates at the time — in the Phoenix Pride parade.



Gov. Katie Hobbs became the first Arizona governor to speak at the Phoenix Pride Festival when she appeared at the event on Oct. 21. She ended her remarks by taking a selfie with the crowd. (Photos by Matt Hennie)

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