



Hi, friend!

We have less than one week left for bills to receive a hearing in their assigned committees. The Committee Report Deadline for House Bills is Tuesday, February 21 and for Senate Bills is Thursday, February 23.

This week brought us several committee hearings of interest that covered important issues regarding juvenile justice reform and education policy changes. Two familiar issues that we fought against in last year's legislative session also were topics of discussion: A "Materials Harmful to Minors" bill that could lead to book banning in school and public libraries received a hearing; and a bill that would have restricted classroom discussions of topics regarding race nearly received a hearing, but legislators pulled the bill after advocates rallied against it on Tuesday afternoon.

Read on for more information on the week's events and for upcoming advocacy opportunities!

Thanks for all you do to support Hoosier youth and families.

Sarah



Gender Affirming Care

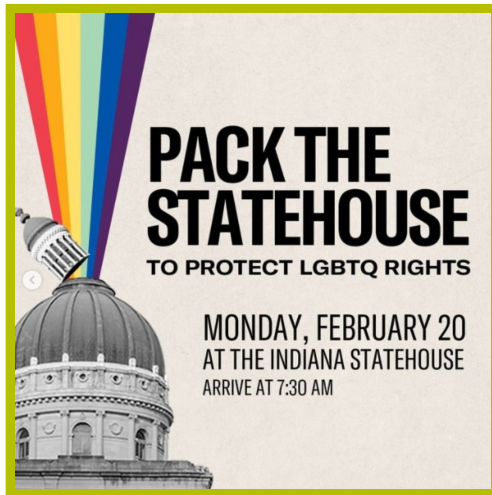
There are many misconceptions about what gender-affirming care means, which has led to several bills in the legislature that limit or outright ban this type of care for LGBTQ youth in Indiana. One bill that deeply concerns us that has passed out of committee and received its 2nd reading yesterday afternoon in the full House chamber is [HB1407](#). If passed, this bill would remove the rights of DCS to intervene in cases where a child is in danger from living in a non-affirming environment where critical medical and psychological care is withheld.

Experts agree that gender-affirming care is lifesaving healthcare that encompasses a big umbrella of services designed to treat gender dysphoria. These services include anything from mental and social support to medical and surgical care.

Gender-affirming care is age appropriate. There are non-permanent options that can provide time for youth to explore their gender without intensifying gender dysphoria. Just like any other health condition, it is important to provide access to care in order to prevent further complications. Denying access to gender-affirming care can increase the

risk of self-harm and suicidal ideation, while providing access can lead to improved psychological functioning.

Click on the link below to learn more about what gender affirming care is, and isn't.

[READ MORE](#)

Protect the Rights of LGBTQ Hoosiers

HB 1608, known as Indiana's "Don't Say Gay" bill, is one of many anti-LGBTQ bills that legislators have introduced this session. It is currently scheduled to be heard in the House Education Committee on Monday at 8:00am. If passed it would censor or even ban discussion or acknowledgement of LGBTQ people in schools.

Because of this and many other anti-LGBTQ bills moving through the Statehouse this year, our friends at ACLU of Indiana are asking advocates to Pack the Statehouse. The event starts at 7:30am. Plan to arrive early and let legislators know: Hoosiers support the LGBTQ community.

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Police Interrogation of Juveniles

SB 415, ADMISSIBILITY OF STATEMENT BY JUVENILE IN CUSTODY received a hearing on Tuesday in the Committee on Corrections and Criminal Law. If passed, this bill would make a statement made by a child that has been lied to by police inadmissible in court.

An amendment to the bill was introduced that would include a good faith exception to protect police officers who might misspeak but did not intend to lie.

The bill was held until next week in order to consider additional revisions but is expected to pass the Senate. MCCOY supports this bill and agrees with Nicky Jackson, the executive director at the Center of Justice and Post-Exoneration Assistance, who stated, "One wrongful conviction is one too many."

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School Curriculum

School Curriculum

SB 386 DIGNITY AND NONDISCRIMINATION IN EDUCATION was originally set to be heard on Wednesday, February 15th, but was pulled from the agenda **after several groups opposed the legislation during a rally on Tuesday**. If passed, this bill would sensor or eliminate critical lessons on racism and the history of marginalized people in the US. It would create additional burdens for teachers and discourage an inclusive, healthy school environment.

It is unclear if the Senate will hear this bill next week in the education committee meeting, which would be the last opportunity for this bill to be heard before reading deadlines the following week.

Please continue contacting legislators and ask them to oppose SB 386. You can send key legislators a message **here, in just a few clicks!**

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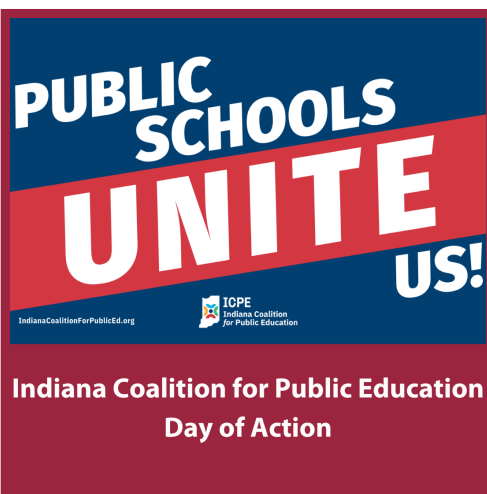
Library Restrictions

Library Restrictions

SB 12 MATERIAL HARMFUL TO MINORS passed (7-4) out of the Senate Committee on Judiciary. This bill would criminalize public schools and libraries for having material deemed "harmful to children." The author and advocates of this bill state that it would help discourage pornography in schools and that it is not intended to censor or ban books. Though the vague terminology of the bill could lead to the criminal prosecution of school teachers and librarians for disseminating important material to students that address issues of gender, sexuality and race.

MCCOY opposes SB12 because we want librarians to feel safe to share books that represent the diverse values and perspectives of our communities in their libraries. We oppose any efforts to ban books and support the processes already in place for schools and libraries to address book challenges.

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ICPE Day of Action

Monday, February 20, 2023 2:00-4:00PM ET

On President's Day at 2 p.m. in the North Atrium join our friends from the Indiana Coalition for Public Education (ICPE) for Public Education Day of Action.

Come and meet public school advocates and take action against bad bills affecting public schools. ICPE will have cards that can be used to drop off messages to your legislators. You can bring your own signs or feel free to use the ones that will be provided.

No RSVP is needed.

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Contact Us

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