

# Wachs campaign: Dana Wachs releases LGBTQIA rights initiative

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OSHKOSH – Rep. Dana Wachs, a Democratic Candidate for Governor, today released an initiative aimed at ensuring LGBTQIA rights in Wisconsin. Wachs launched the initiative today in honor of Pride Month and to highlight changes he would make as Wisconsin's next governor.

“Every person deserves a safe, open, affirming, and honest community. I’m proud to be an ally and supporter of LGBTQIA folks in Wisconsin.

“No one should worry that being who they are will make them a target for discrimination, intimidation, fear, or violence. I wish that wasn’t the case, but we’ve seen a frightening spike in violence against members of the LGBTQIA community nationally in the last few years.

“We can’t change the hearts and minds of folks with the law, but we can make the law ensure that everyone gets treated equally. I’m proud to have co-sponsored bills in the past that would have made discriminating based on gender identity or on the basis of a same-sex married couple illegal.

“As Wisconsinites, we value our friends and neighbors, and we’re darned sure going to make Wisconsin a welcoming and inclusive place,” said Dana Wachs.

Dana’s LGBTQIA Rights plan includes:

## Gender Marker Change on Identification Documents

- Enable people to change the gender marker on identification documents

without having to go through sex reassignment surgery as currently defined in state law.

## Prohibit Discrimination

- Prohibit the discrimination of people based on gender identity, appearance, expression, or behavior. In 2017, Wachs co-sponsored AB 418, which would have prohibited this kind of discrimination.

## Marriage Rights

- Close the loopholes allowing for the discrimination of same-sex couples by making statutory references to spouses gender neutral in state law. In 2017, Wachs co-sponsored AB 417, which would have addressed this marriage discrimination currently still in state law.
- Restore access to health coverage and survivor benefits for domestic partners of state workers. Gov. Walker's rollback of these benefits last year impacted 4,394 domestic partners in Wisconsin according to the Legislative Fiscal Bureau.

## Hate Crimes

- Expand the Wisconsin Hate Crime law to include victims targeted because of their gender identity, appearance, expression, or behavior.

## Schools

- Strengthen Wisconsin's anti-bullying laws.
- Increase funding for anti-bullying programs.
- Pledge to veto right-wing GOP attempts to legislate what restrooms school children must use.

## Transgender Healthcare

- Require health insurance plans to cover transgender healthcare. This includes providing transgender-inclusive health benefits to state employees along with providing coverage through Medicaid.
- Prohibit mental health providers from engaging in conversion therapy with a minor.

June is National LGBTQIA Pride Month. Wachs previously released anti-discrimination policies in his American Dream Initiative in January 2018.