

WisDems: ICYMI: U.S. Sen. Johnson's record of opposing LGBT+ rights

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MADISON, Wis. — Going into Pride Month, The American Independent [released](#) a new report, detailing Ron Johnson's history of voting against the LGBT+ community.

The American Independent: [Meet an anti-LGBTQ Senate candidate: Sen. Ron Johnson of Wisconsin](#)

- From his first Senate campaign in 2010 to his current re-election bid, Sen. Ron Johnson (R-WI) has almost always come down against protecting LGBTQ rights, earning him a [0 score](#) from the Human Rights Campaign.
- While Johnson's campaign site makes no mention of his position on equality, a review of his votes and statements over the past 12 years makes it clear that he does not believe in equal rights for LGBTQ Americans.
- Last year, the Democratic majority in the House of Representatives passed the Equality Act, a major piece of LGBTQ rights [legislation](#). The bill, which would expressly add protections for LGBTQ people to existing civil rights laws, has [stalled](#) in the Senate — where a 60-vote supermajority is required to advance most bills — thanks to [opposition](#) from Republicans including Johnson.
- "I don't have time to get into all the potential problems with that," Johnson [told](#) a Janesville, Wisconsin, radio station last March while speaking about the bill. "I don't think it has a chance in the Senate, which is a good

thing for America. By the way, I'm all for equality. I'm just not for their version of equality."

- This is hardly the first LGBTQ civil rights law that Johnson has opposed.
- In 2015, he [voted](#) to allow service providers to discriminate against LGBTQ homeless and runaway youths.
- In 2013, Johnson [voted against](#) the Employment Non-Discrimination Act, a [bill](#) that would have explicitly barred businesses from discriminating against job candidates and employees on the basis of their sexual orientation or gender identity.
- Johnson ran in 2010 as a strong opponent of same-sex marriage. "I'm a pretty traditional guy. I believe in a culture of life and I believe marriage is between one man and one woman," he [said](#) on his campaign website.
- Once the Supreme Court issued its landmark [Obergefell v. Hodges](#) ruling guaranteeing all adult couples the freedom to marry regardless of their sexes in 2015, Johnson [repeatedly](#) joined unsuccessful [efforts](#) to grant special legal protections to anti-LGBTQ bigots who disagreed with the decision.
- In 2016, Johnson drew [national attention](#) for failing to acknowledge that the deadly Pulse nightclub mass shooting in Orlando, Florida, was a hate crime against the LGBTQ community.
- Johnson has been open about his transphobia. At a March 2022 virtual town hall, he argued that transgender girls and women should not be able to participate in sports or use bathrooms that match their gender identity.
- "...Johnson earned scores of zero [from the Human Right Campaign] for both the 115th and 116th Congresses — indicating that he voted against equal

rights at every opportunity. In contrast, Sen. Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) — Wisconsin's openly gay junior senator — has a perfect 100 score from the LGBTQ rights organization.

- Johnson did, however, receive a [100% rating](#) from FRC Action, the political arm of the Family Research Council. The Southern Poverty Law Center has [designated](#) that group as an “anti-LGBTQ hate group.”
- Recent polling has shown Johnson is facing an [uphill](#) battle for re-election, with approval ratings in the low to mid-30% range.