

# Gov. Evers: Keeps promise to protect LGBTQ youth, vetoes bill prohibiting gender-affirming care in Wisconsin

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MADISON — Gov. Tony Evers today vetoed Assembly Bill 465, a bill passed by Republican members of the Wisconsin State Legislature banning gender-affirming care for minor patients with gender dysphoria. The governor has repeatedly signaled he would veto the bill as well as any other anti-LGBTQ legislation sent to his desk. Gender-affirming care is recognized by most major medical associations as the evidence-based treatment for transgender and gender-nonconforming youth with gender dysphoria. The American Medical Association, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Psychological Association, and the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry have [all stated](#) that gender-affirming care saves lives.

“I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to restricting physicians from providing evidence-based and medically appropriate care to their patients, restricting parents from making decisions with physicians to ensure their kids receive the healthcare they need, and preventing patients from receiving that basic, lifesaving care,” said Gov. Evers. “Healthcare providers should be trusted to provide medically appropriate and accurate information, treatment, and care for their patients without the unnecessary political interference of politicians.

“Further, and especially important to me personally, I am vetoing this bill in its entirety because I object to the Legislature’s ongoing efforts to manufacture and perpetuate false, hateful, and discriminatory anti-LGBTQ policies and rhetoric in our state,” continued Gov. Evers. “This type of legislation, and the rhetoric beget by pursuing it, harms LGBTQ people and kids’ mental health, emboldens anti-LGBTQ hate and violence, and threatens the safety and dignity of LGBTQ Wisconsinites. I

will veto any bill that makes Wisconsin a less safe, less inclusive, and less welcoming place for LGBTQ people and kids. I support LGBTQ Wisconsinites, and I will continue to do everything in my power to defend them, protect their rights, and keep them safe.”

Gov. Evers has been a consistent and vocal advocate for the LGBTQ community both during and preceding his time as governor. Gov. Evers has been committed to continuing the state’s long and proud tradition of advancing initiatives to ensure LGBTQ equity and fighting to protect, support, and celebrate LGBTQ kids and the entire LGBTQ community. He has [spoken out against](#) and pledged to veto numerous bills targeting LGBTQ Wisconsinites—similar to those introduced in this session—including bills discriminating against transgender kids and athletes and bills restricting education around LGBTQ issues and history in schools in 2022.

Gov. Evers’ first action after being sworn into office was signing [Executive Order #1](#), which prohibited discrimination and harassment based on sexual orientation and gender identity and expression, as well as other classes such as age, race, religion, color, disability, military or veteran status, national origin, etc., in state employment, public services, state contracts, and grants. Executive Order #1 also directed state agencies to develop policies to ensure all people are afforded equal opportunity, along with other measures to prohibit discrimination and harassment.

Additionally, in June 2019, for the first time in state history, Gov. Evers signed [Executive Order #29](#) to raise the Rainbow Pride Flag over the East Wing of the State Capitol building and throughout the state of Wisconsin in recognition of Pride Month and to send a clear and unequivocal message that Wisconsin is a welcoming and inclusive place for all. Since then, the Rainbow Pride Flag has flown over the Capitol each year for the month of June until [last year](#) when Gov. Evers raised the Progress Pride Flag over the State Capitol for the first time. An iteration of the widely recognized Rainbow Pride Flag, the Progress Pride Flag was created to symbolize the inclusion of marginalized communities within the LGBTQ community.

During the Pride Month celebration in June 2021, Gov. Evers [signed Executive Order #121](#) and directed Evers Administration cabinet agencies to use gender-neutral language whenever practicable in external documents, including but not limited to: using gender-neutral terms and pronouns, drafting to eliminate the need for pronouns, omitting superfluous gendered words, and making any reference to gendered family relations. Gov. Evers also signed [Executive Order](#)

[#122](#) requiring the Wisconsin Department of Health Services, Department of Corrections, and the Department of Children and Families to take appropriate steps to expressly disallow payment of state and federal funds allocated by their respective agencies for conversion therapy for minors. Numerous medical associations and professional organizations oppose the practice of conversion therapy, and according to research conducted by the Family Acceptance Project, adolescent conversion efforts contribute to higher risks of depression and suicide for LGBTQ youth.

Additionally, during the 2023-25 biennial budget process, Gov. Evers used his constitutional veto authority to block a provision put forward by Republicans in the Legislature that would have prevented the state's Medicaid program from covering gender-affirming care, such as puberty-blocking drugs, hormone replacement therapy, and gender affirmation surgeries.

The governor's veto message for Assembly Bill 465 is available [here](#).

An online version of this release is available [here](#).