

TLDEF, NCLR and NCTE Joint Statement of Solidarity



During Lesbian Visibility Week, the Transgender Legal Defense and Education Fund, National Center for Lesbian Rights, and National Center for Transgender Equality honor the lives and experiences of transgender and non-binary lesbians. We affirm that trans women are women and that trans and non-binary lesbians are a valued part of the LGBTQ community.

As politicians and policymakers seek to strip LGBTQ people, especially transgender people, of their freedoms, it is important for us to stand firm in solidarity. This year, there have been nearly 200 bills in state legislatures targeting trans people, with the vast majority of them aimed at trans women and girls. These bills seek to deny trans women and girls equal participation in our communities — on sports teams, in the bathroom, and in the classroom. These attacks on transgender women in society should be resisted with the full force of the LGBTQ community. An attack on one of us is an attack on all of us.

We honor the ways that lesbians throughout history have fought for women's rights, even when queer women were often excluded from feminist circles. Groups like Lavender Menace in the 1970s fought for lesbian inclusion in the feminist movement, and supported the burgeoning trans movement. Trans women and non-binary people have also always been a part of the lesbian-feminist and radical feminist movements, including non-binary lesbian pioneer Leslie Feinberg. Efforts to exclude trans women and non-binary people from lesbian and feminist communities are ahistorical, morally wrong, and go against the founding values of those movements.

All women and gender-nonconforming people are affected by issues such as unequal pay, gender-based violence, and discrimination in health care. That harm is compounded for women who live at the intersection of multiple marginalized identities — queer women, trans women, women of color, and disabled women experience even greater disparities compared to women who don't hold those identities. Our feminism must be inclusive of all women and their experiences.

We see opportunities for cisgender lesbians to show up in solidarity:

- Affirm that trans women are women and trans and non-binary lesbians are lesbians
- Become better informed about the issues trans women face
- Speak out and organize against political attacks that target trans women
- Ensure that trans women and non-binary people are included and welcome in lesbian spaces

Together, we are building a powerful movement for gender justice.

The National Center for Lesbian Rights (NCLR) is a national legal organization committed to advancing the human and civil rights of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer community through litigation, public policy advocacy, and public education. Since its founding, NCLR has maintained a longstanding commitment to racial and economic justice and the LGBTQ community's most vulnerable. <http://www.nclrights.org>

The National Center for Transgender Equality (NCTE) advocates to change policies and society to increase understanding and acceptance of transgender people. In the nation's capital and throughout the country, NCTE works to replace disrespect, discrimination, and violence with empathy, opportunity, and justice. <https://transequality.org>

Transgender Legal Defense and Education Fund (TLDEF) is a national civil rights organization that uses public education, test-case litigation, direct legal services, and public policy efforts to achieve lived and legal equality for transgender people and to end all discrimination based on gender identity and expression. <https://transgenderlegal.org>

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