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Families Block Idaho Law Banning Health Care for Transgender Youth

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BOISE – In a victory for families of transgender youth and their medical providers, a federal judge has preliminarily blocked enforcement of an Idaho law banning gender-affirming health care treatments for transgender people under 18 years old.

In his ruling, District Court Judge Lynn Winmill ruled that the law’s prohibition of hormones, puberty blockers, and other medically accepted practices likely violates the Due Process Clause and the Equal Protection Clause under the Fourteenth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. Granting this preliminary injunction means trans youth will not lose access to their gender-affirming health care on January 1, 2024. The law will not go into effect while the lawsuit continues until its resolution to determine whether House Bill 71 violates the plaintiffs’ Due Process and Equal Protection rights.

In a lawsuit filed by the American Civil Liberties Union; the ACLU of Idaho; Wrest Collective; Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP; and Groombridge, Wu, Baughman & Stone LLP; two Idaho families assert that HB 71, signed into law by Governor Brad Little earlier this year, violates the rights of transgender youth and their parents under the U.S. Constitution.

“This victory is significant for Idaho transgender youth and their parents, and will have an immediate positive impact on their daily lives,” said **Leo Morales, Executive Director of the ACLU of Idaho**. “This judicial decision is a much-needed ray of hope for trans people amid a years-long onslaught against their rights to access health care and ability to navigate the world around them. Everyone should be free to live and thrive

in their authentic identity, which means transgender people should not be shut out of accessing medically sound health care.”

“Every family wants what’s best for their children, and families who love and accept their transgender youth are no different,” said **Li Nowlin-Sohl, Senior Staff Attorney for the ACLU’s LGBTQ & HIV Project**. “These dangerous efforts to control our bodies and our families threaten the well-being of trans youth, the strength of our communities, and the ability of every family to determine what’s best for their child. We’re thankful the court saw the danger this law represented to our clients and we’re determined to fight this ban until Idaho is a safe place to raise every family.”

The challenge against Idaho’s ban is one of a dozen such legal challenges brought by the ACLU and its nationwide affiliate network against bans on transgender youth’s health care. In November 2023, families and medical providers in Tennessee and Kentucky asked the United States Supreme Court to review a decision from the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals allowing bans in those states to take effect.

Idaho’s ban is one of many passed in just the last year uprooting families, threatening the current and future well-being of transgender youth, and alarming medical organizations and pediatricians alike. If allowed to take effect, HB 71 would charge medical providers with a felony, threatening them with up to a decade in prison.

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*The **ACLU of Idaho** is a non-partisan, non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation and enhancement of civil liberties and civil rights. The ACLU of Idaho strives to advance civil liberties and civil rights through activities that include litigation, education, and lobbying. Learn more at acluidaho.org.*