

# 2023 QUEER CAUCUS LEGISLATIVE AGENDA ACHIEVEMENTS

*The Minnesota House Queer Caucus was an undeniable force throughout the legislative session. The Queer Caucus led efforts to advance equity and create policies to ensure Minnesota became a refuge state for our LGBTQIA2S+, trans, and nonbinary community. Minnesota is a leader in LGBTQIA2S+ rights and with the strong leadership of the Queer Caucus, our state will continue to protect LGBTQIA2S+ people from discrimination and violence.*

*The list below highlights some of the accomplishments we delivered from our legislative agenda.*

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## Decriminalizing HIV and Funding

### Resources/Services

- \$12.1 million in funding to address HIV needs in Minnesota
- The repeal a 1995 law that allows prosecutors to charge someone who “knowingly harbors an infectious agent” and engages in behaviors that could transfer it to another person, such as through sex, sharing needles or by donating blood, sperm or organs. A person who takes steps to prevent transmission, as advised by health professionals, is not guilty of a crime under the law.

### School Facilities

Our gender-expansive and trans youth are telling us they feel safer and more respected when they have the choice to choose which bathroom they want to use. There is also a plethora of reasons students may feel more comfortable being able to have privacy in a single-stall restroom. The Queer Caucus worked relentlessly to secure a \$2 million investment in grant funding in the Education Budget Bill for schools to construct single-stall restrooms.

## Trans Refuge

Governor Walz signed the Trans Refuge bill (HF 146) into law in April. The law establishes Minnesota as a refuge state for trans people, their families, and health care providers. The bill protects people seeking or providing gender-affirming health care in Minnesota.

## LGBTQ2S+ Council

We created a Council on LGBTQIA Minnesotans. The new panel will advise the governor and the legislature, perform studies, and make policy recommendations on issues that affect our community. The Council’s goal is to improve the implementation of economic, social, legal, and political equality for Minnesotan’s LGBTQIA community. The Council will also help increase outreach to the LGBTQIA2S+ community and advocacy organizations.

## Take Pride Act

Prejudiced and harmful language has no place in Minnesota’s civil rights law. We updated the definition of sexual orientation to one that better represents Minnesota’s LGBTQIA2S+ community by repealing outdated language in the statute that associates the LGBTQIA2S+ community with pedophilia and ties sexual orientation to a criminal act in the Minnesota Human Rights Act.

# PRIORITY BILLS FOR 2024 BIENNIUM

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## Comprehensive Sex Ed

Comprehensive sex education is the most effective type of sex education. Studies have shown that comprehensive sex education can reduce the rates of unplanned pregnancy and STIs by up to 70%. In contrast, abstinence-only education has not been shown to be effective in preventing pregnancy or STIs.

This bill will require the commissioner of education to develop a model program for sexual health education. A school district or charter school must implement a comprehensive sexual health education program for students in elementary and secondary school, including students with disabilities and students enrolled in a state-approved alternative program.

## Gender-Affirming Rights Act

Everyone has a fundamental right to make autonomous decisions about their gender and use of gender-affirming care. This bill creates a new section in law titled the “Gender-Affirming Rights Act” and protects an individual’s right to make decisions about their gender and related gender-affirming health care decisions. The legislation prevents local units of government from restricting the right to make autonomous decisions.