

Opposition Oral Testimony Against House Bill 2426
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I am Iridescent Riffel, and I speak today on behalf of Equality Kansas. I use She/They pronouns and I am here today to speak in opposition to HB 2426, and I thank you for the opportunity to speak.

I've appeared before the legislature the last several years to discuss the impacts of other legislation targeting the transgender community. Today I want to speak about the consequences of legislation such as HB 2426. When legislation like this is proposed it has outside consequences even if the legislation itself does not become law. When our identities are put up for debate- it removes our humanity. Our very existence is framed as something that is "optional" or "chosen" and it is this very debate that has led to mass misinformation to be spread about our community and has led to our demonization.

On January 5th 2026, the Lemkin Institute for Genocide Prevention and Human Security warned the world that the United States is in the early stages of genocide. Dr. Henry Theriault, former president of the International Association of Genocide Scholars stated, "**the kinds of legal shifts that are happening and the kind of blatant hatred being expressed by Trump and his followers and government leaders..I think we're already at the point for trans folks, for immigrants, where the damage is being done. So it's not so much "will genocide happen" as "we've got to stop it from happening"**".

Such debates push hate and violence towards our community. This year I have lost a trans friend to violence because of her identity. When I appeared before the legislature last year I spoke of teenager, Brianna Ghey, who was stabbed to death by her peers- peers who were emboldened by anti-trans legislation and misinformation regarding her identity. I hoped such violence would stop then.

Legislation like HB 2426 is furthering this mission of genocide. I urge the Committee on Judiciary to vote against HB 2426. I urge committee members to listen transgender Kansans, who show up year after year- not hate groups which have been allowed to speak before the legislature- often many of which do not originate within the state of Kansas.

Over a year ago, I lost a friend and fellow organizer after she was shot and killed for being trans. In the last week of 2023, Amber Minor was shot and killed in Raytown, Missouri because of her trans identity. In February of 2024, Nex Benedict, 16 years old, was beaten inside a bathroom at Owasso High School in Owasso, Oklahoma and died shortly after. Every year we gather to mourn those of us killed on Transgender Day of Remembrance.

This violence is perpetuated through anti-trans legislation like HB 2426 which aims to erase transgender people. Our ability to live safely and freely isn't "woke", it isn't some political game to be "won"-it's a basic human right and need.

I personally have experienced what it is like to be targeted for my identity. I know what it is like to have someone like Chaya Raichik target me. I've been targeted by a neo-nazi website known as Kiwifarms which doxxed my personal information, my partner's address, my parent's phone number. Kiwifarms also then relentlessly sent threatening voicemails to my father, and had begun sending me death threats on Twitter. They also signed me up for mail I did not want to receive to show that they knew my address and discussed swatting me as well. I had to connect emergency services to ensure that I was placed on a no swatting list so I would not wake up to the barrel of a police officer's gun pointed at my face- all because I choose to live my life authentically. I was stalked for about four months in Lawrence because they shared out my license plate.

How many of us are going to have to die for you to care? How many of our children will have to be beaten senselessly or stabbed to death for you to show your heart?

Would you want this to happen to your own children? Would you shrug, turn your eye, close your ears, and pass laws that make them the target of hate and violence too?

Or does it require the threat of Nuremberg style trials for you to suddenly care about the sanctity of human life?

You can end this cycle. All it takes is courage to stand against the American Fascist Party. For some of you- this may mean voting against party lines. The violence perpetuated so often from this room is leading to the death of our community.

A vote in favor of HB 2426 is a vote for complacency in the face of genocide. A vote in favor of HB 2426 is your ticket to being remembered as signing our death warrants. And for many of you- a vote in favor of HB 2426 could lead to your own International Criminal Court hearing.

What did you do in the face of the American Fascist Party?

Thank you for your time and attention. I'm happy to stand for questions at the appropriate time.