



Planned Parenthood Advocates of Montana

Act. No matter what.

## Legislative Update 2.6.23


We are already in week six of the Montana Legislative Session, and so far we've seen lots of attacks on the LGBTQ+ community and direct and indirect attacks on abortion care access. Several bills are moving through committees, and through both the Senate and House chambers this week, so we are once again asking you to take action! Links for sending messages, finding your Legislators, and signing up to testify can be found towards the bottom of this message.

Say NO to the  
SLATE OF HATE

SB 99      HB 359  
HB 234      HB 361  
HB 303

Call the Capitol switchboard  
406-444-4800

Use the email form  
<https://leg.mt.gov/web-messaging/>

 MHRN  
MONTANA HUMAN RIGHTS NETWORK

### SB 200 - Revise Use of Party Affiliation for Nonpartisan Races

The hearing for [SB 200](#) was postponed and may be rescheduled as early as Wednesday. **Contact the Senate State Administration Committee and tell them to vote NO on SB 200.** If your Senator is on this committee, please send them a message directly. A list of the Senate Committees and who sits on each [can be found here](#). SB 200 would allow candidates for nonpartisan races to declare a partisan affiliation and to have that affiliation appear on the ballot. Creating partisan offices in judicial races is an attack on the American concept of the independent judiciary. A judge plays a role different from that of a legislator or executive branch official. Rather than making decisions based upon the expressed views or preferences of the electorate, a judge makes decisions based

upon the law and the facts of every case. Judges and community members should be elected based on their qualifications and not their party affiliation. This bill could also extend to School Trustee campaigns as well as Judicial campaigns.

**HB361 – Provide that Use of a Name and Sex by a Student is not Discrimination – Hearing on Wednesday (2/8)**

This bill would allow students to “deadname” or mis-gender trans, nonbinary or Two-Spirit students in schools without it being considered discrimination. Please join Planned Parenthood Advocates of Montana in opposing this bill and saying NO to bullying. All students should have a safe learning environment. This hearing is scheduled for Wednesday, February 8th at 8 AM in House Judiciary. **Contact the House Judiciary Committee and urge them to vote NO. [You can sign up to testify by 5pm, Tues. 2/7.](#)**

**HB359 – Prohibit Minors from Attending Drag Shows – Hearing on Thursday (2/9)**

This bill has been introduced and referred to House Judiciary, and is now scheduled for this Thursday. [This anti-drag bill](#) is a huge attack on freedom of expression and parental rights. HB 359 bans anyone under 18 from attending drag events, including drag story hours and drag bingo events, which are very popular. We are also very concerned about this bill because of the slippery slope leading to the criminalization of trans and nonbinary lives and identities. For instance, a trans person who is also in a band, is a stand-up comedian, or performs in theatre would be punished under this language. Businesses hosting drag events would be falsely labeled as “sexually oriented,” and put in the same category as strip clubs. We know that [Montanans LOVE drag events](#), **so please send a message and/or sign up to make testimony by 5pm on Wed. 2/8.**

**HB303 – Implement Medical Ethics & Diversity Act (Religious/Moral/Ethical Objection for Medical Provider, Institution and Insurer)**

This is a very broad, terrible bill that would allow a medical provider, medical institution or insurer to refuse a medical service based on “conscience”. The sponsor and proponents were very careful to message it in a way that it is not based on an objection of a person or patient. Abortion is the only service that is clearly lined out in the bill. However, there was a lot of testimony by proponents that spoke about gender affirming care and transgender people, as well as abortion care and access. **Contact your Representative and ask them to vote NO on the 3rd reading of HB 303.**

**We also encourage you to send a thank you message to your representative for previously voting NO** (all Democrats and four Republicans: Edward Buttrey, Ross Fitzgerald, Gregory Frazer, and Mike Hopkins).

**SB99 – Youth Health Protection Act (Anti-Trans Youth Health Ban)**

Please contact your Senator and tell them to vote no on [SB 99](#). Here is an [easy form that our partners at MHRN](#) made! If you sent a message about this bill last week, feel free to send another one. **This bill is on the floor tomorrow, so**

**please send a message to your Senator or call the Capitol switchboard (406.444.4800) by NOON tomorrow.** SB 99 is an extreme bill that is designed to prevent trans, nonbinary, and Two-Spirit youth and young adults from accessing medical care and support from educators and other professionals. The restrictions in this bill will also hurt access to medical specialists for all Montana youth. This bill also goes so far as to prevent social transition in schools and publicly funded buildings such as state government buildings. For instance, a public employee working for the State of Montana or a teacher could not address a trans youth by their chosen name or pronouns.

### **HB 234 – Public Display or Distribution of “Obscene Materials” to Minors**

Please tell your Representative to reject [HB 234](#). **This bill is on the floor tomorrow, so please send a message to your Senator or call the Capitol switchboard (406.444.4800) by NOON tomorrow.** HB 234 claims to protect minors from “obscene” materials, but actually infringes on the right to access information. We are very concerned about how this bill could remove the authority of local school boards, the First Amendment rights of students, and parental rights. HB 234 is unnecessary, misleading, and is specifically targeting a book with LGBTQ+ themes.

### **SB154 – Right to Privacy Prohibits the Right to Abortion**

[SB 154](#) would chip away at the personal right to privacy by excluding abortion care from constitutional protections. This defies the Montana Constitution and the Armstrong decision, which specifically protects the right to abortion in our state. This bill has been transmitted to the House after passing 2nd and 3rd Reading last week, but it has not been scheduled yet in the House Judiciary Committee. **Please be on the lookout for calls to action from us either via email and/or social media when the committee hearing is scheduled.** If you are interested in testifying on Zoom or submitting written testimony, you will need to do so by 5pm the day before the hearing.

**Thanks to Montana Human Rights Network (MHRN) for their work in providing legislative updates and information about these bills, in addition to information on how to take action (see below)!**

## **How to contact your legislators**

It's easy to contact them by phone or email, so don't be shy about sharing your thoughts with them!

- [Look up your legislators here.](#)
- Call the very friendly Capitol operators at 406.444.4800. The switchboard is open 7:30 AM to 5 PM on weekdays, and you can leave messages for up to five (5) individual legislators or one legislative committee per call.
- Send an email using contact information from the [legislative roster](#) or using the [online email form](#). The email form is especially helpful when you're emailing an entire committee.
- Here is the link to look up bill information:  
[http://laws.leg.mt.gov/legprd/law0203w\\$.startup?P\\_SESS=20231](http://laws.leg.mt.gov/legprd/law0203w$.startup?P_SESS=20231)

- Sign up to testify or submit testimony: <https://leg.mt.gov/public-testimony/>



### In other news...

#### Groundhog Day Press Event

PPAMT and our coalition partners decided to lean into the Groundhog Day theme and hold a press event about the same old bills we often see, and the never-ending attacks on access to abortion care. You can view the press conference on YouTube, thanks to the Montana Public Affairs Network.

[Watch Video Here!](#)

### Upcoming event in Missoula!

Join PPMT and PPAMT staff at The Dram Shop Central on February 21st from 5-8 PM. A portion of the proceeds from every beer purchased will benefit Planned Parenthood of Montana to support honest, expert sexual and reproductive health services. Also look forward to a raffle with prizes generously donated from local businesses. Share the event page with your friends and raise a glass for reproductive rights!

[Facebook Event](#)

**PINTS FOR  
PLANNED  
PARENTHOOD!**

**THE  
DRAM  
SHOP**

**JOIN US IN  
MISSOULA**  
FEB. 21ST  
5 - 8 PM

**Montana**

Thank you for continuing to stand with us and for taking action to fight these attacks on our communities! Our elected officials need to hear from us. Please send messages today!