



Statement on Kentucky Senate Bill 150 by Kentucky Academy of Science March 21, 2023

Kentucky is fast becoming one of our nation's leaders in scientific developments such as aerospace engineering and renewable energy. Many of the 4300+ members of the Kentucky Academy of Science work to educate and mentor students who will go to work in these and other careers in our state, greatly benefitting the economic growth of our communities. As scientists, we know that the pursuit of scientific knowledge and achievement involves progress, innovation, and diversity of human thought and expertise.

Lawmakers displayed a shocking rejection of that hard-won progress when they recently voted to pass [SB 150](#), a bill that directly takes aim at an already marginalized population of Kentuckians, our LGBTQIA+ youth. This bill even severely restricts parental choices, even while originating as a bill that claimed to support parental rights.

The study of science may be inherently apolitical, but this legislation actively seeks to harm the very people whom many of us have built a career out of serving. We are proud that students feel safe in our classrooms, and we are heartened by how seamlessly our trans students fit in with their peers and friends who couldn't care less what sexual organs they were born with. This bill erodes that safety and comfort, in fact, that is its sole purpose. A Kentucky parent who recently tragically lost her trans child to suicide has this to add, "As a parent we try to create and maintain an environment for our children to survive and thrive. We rely on the decency of others to create safe spaces when our children leave our presence. If their brains don't feel safe, they are biologically unable to focus, problem-solve, or learn. These bills will cripple our children in ways we can't fathom."

The Kentucky Academy of Science, an organization made up largely of members who educate, mentor, and support Kentucky students of all ages, hereby formally condemns the actions of our current legislature. Furthermore, we as a group refuse to subject our students to the harm and bigotry allowed by this bill and will work to protect them. Our college students, research assistants,

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727 W. Main St. • Louisville, KY 40202
859-227-2837

and field scientists may not be directly subjected to the cruelty of SB 150 as they are no longer minors, but since [nearly a quarter of Kentucky's transgender and nonbinary kids attempted to take their own lives in 2022](https://www.thetrevorproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/The-Trevor-Project-2022-National-Survey-on-LGBTQ-Youth-Mental-Health-by-State-Kentucky.pdf) (<https://www.thetrevorproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/The-Trevor-Project-2022-National-Survey-on-LGBTQ-Youth-Mental-Health-by-State-Kentucky.pdf>), fighting this bill is of great interest for us since we want those kids to make it into our classrooms in the first place.

This statement therefore serves as a voice of support for all LGBTQIA+ students in Kentucky – we are your teachers, your employers, and sometimes your confidants, and we will continue to serve you, especially when others refuse to do so.

Julie Ann Reizner
President
Kentucky Academy of Science