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Target becomes latest company to suffer backlash for LGBTQ+ support, pulls some Pride month clothing

By ANNE D'INNOENZIO May 24, 2023



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NEW YORK (AP) —
Target is removing

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other changes to its LGBTQ+ merchandise nationwide ahead of Pride month after intense backlash from some customers who confronted workers and tipped over displays.

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- Target on the defensive after removing some products aimed at LGBTQ+
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“Since introducing this year’s collection, we’ve experienced threats impacting our team members’ sense of safety and well-being while at work,” Target said in a statement Tuesday. “Given these volatile circumstances, we are making adjustments to our plans, including removing items that

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confrontational
behavior”

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customers knocked
down Pride displays at
some stores, angrily
approached workers
and posted
threatening videos on
social media from
inside the stores.

Target declined to
specify Wednesday
which items it was
removing but among
the ones that garnered
the most attention
were “tuck friendly”
women’s swimsuits
that allow trans
women who have not
had gender-affirming
operations to conceal
their private parts.

Designs by [Abprallen](#),
a London-based
company that designs
and sells occult- and
satanic-themed
LGBTQ+ clothing and
accessories, have also
created backlash.



The Pride
merchandise has been

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Target confirmed that

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front of the stores to the back in some Southern stores after confrontations and backlash from shoppers in those areas.

Target's response to confrontations in its stores is taking place as state legislatures introduce a record number of bills targeting LGBTQ+ individuals.

There are close to 500 anti-LGBTQ+ bills that have gone before state legislatures since the start of this year, an unprecedented number, according to the American Civil Liberties Union.

Those efforts focus on health, particularly gender-affirming health care for transgender youth, and education. State legislatures are pushing to prevent discussions in school regarding sexuality and gender identity.

At least 17 states have enacted laws restricting or banning gender-affirming care for transgender

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enforcement in some,
including Arkansas. An

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often those bills sprang not from grassroots or constituent demand, but from the pens of a handful of conservative interest groups.

Target's Pride month collection has also been the subject of [several misleading videos](#) in recent weeks, with social media users falsely claiming the retailer is selling "tuck-friendly" bathing suits designed for kids or in kids' sizes.

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The moves come as beer brand Bud Light is still grappling with a

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its customer base by
partnering with

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Light's parent
company said it will
triple its marketing
spending in the U.S.
this summer as it tries
to restore sales it lost
after the brand
partnered with the
transgender
influencer.

Target, based in
Minnesota, and other
retailers including
Walmart and H&M
have been expanding
their LGBTQ+
displays to celebrate
Pride month for
roughly a decade. This
year transgender
issues — including
gender-affirming
health care and
participation in sports
— have been a divisive
topic in state
legislatures and the
backlash has turned
hostile.

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