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Louisiana governor vetoes bills targeting gender-affirming care, pronoun usage

BY JOE JACQUEZ - 06/30/23 10:42 PM ET

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Louisiana Gov. John Bel Edwards speaks in Baton Rouge, La., Tuesday, Feb. 1, 2022. (AP Photo/Matthew Hinton)

Louisiana Gov. Jon Bel Edwards (D) vetoed three bills targeting the LGBTQ community on Friday.

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HB 648 would have banned gender-affirming care for minors — barring puberty-blockers, hormone treatment and surgeries. In a [6-page veto message](#) sent to state House Speaker Clay

Schexnayder, Edwards argued that the bill is part of a “targeted assault on children.”

“This bill is entitled the ‘Stop Harming Our Kids Act,’ which is ironic because that is precisely what it does,” the governor wrote. “This bill denies healthcare to a very small, unique, and vulnerable group of children.”

“And, without doubt, it is part of a targeted assault on children that the bill itself deems ‘not normal,’” he later added.

Another bill that experts dubbed as the state’s version of Florida’s “Don’t Say Gay Bill” — — HB 466 — would prevent teachers from discussing gender identity and sexual orientation in public school

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classrooms. In his [veto message](#), Edwards said the bill places “vulnerable children” on the “front lines of a vicious culture war.”

“The bill is also unduly harsh as it allows students, teachers, and others serving students to totally disregard a student’s autonomy by forcing the student to answer to pronouns that they do not wish to use,” he said, adding “This forced rejection of self-identity is particularly cruel to a child and this cruelty may adversely affect the child in their formative years.”

Edwards also vetoed another bill — HB 81 — that would require public school teachers to use the pronouns and names that the students had at birth.

The GOP controlled state legislature is likely not done trying to make the measures law. Multiple GOP lawmakers [told the Associated Press](#) they likely will convene a veto

season to attempt to overturn the governor's decision.

Louisiana would have become just the latest state with a GOP controlled legislature to pass bills targeting the LGBTQ community.

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As of June, 20 states have passed a bill banning gender-affirming care, according to the Human Rights Campaign — including Nebraska, Texas and Oklahoma. In addition, eight other states are considering a law banning gender-affirming care.

More than 525 anti-LGBTQ bills have been proposed in 41 states just this year, according to data by the HRC.

The Hill's Steff Danielle

Thomas contributed reporting.

TAGS GENDER-AFFIRMING CARE JOHN BEL EDWARDS LGBTQ COMMUNITY LGTBQ LOUISIANA TRANSGENDER RIGHTS

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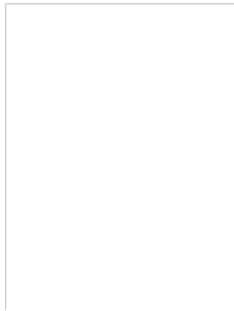
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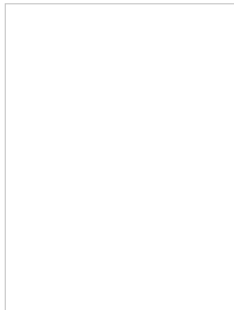
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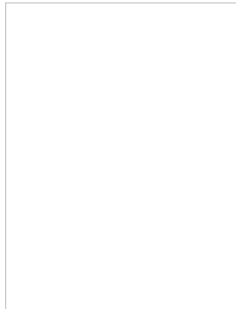
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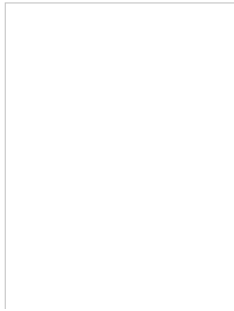
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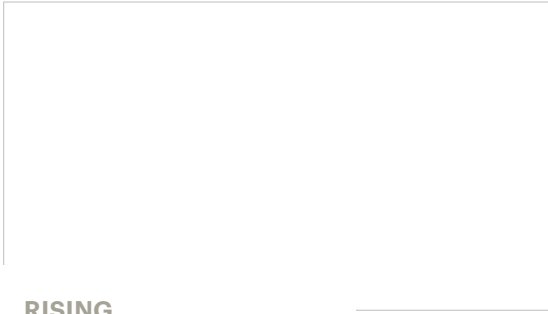
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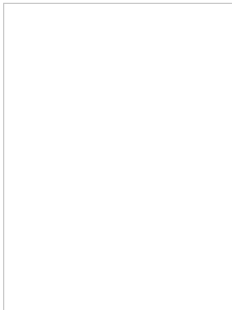
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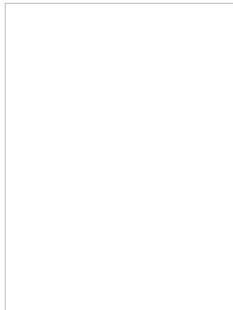
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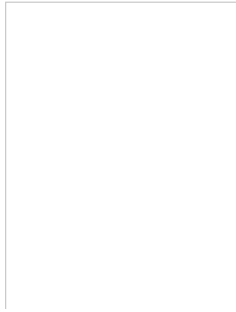
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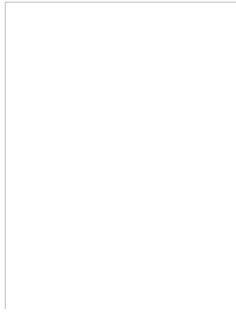
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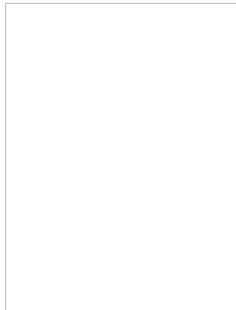
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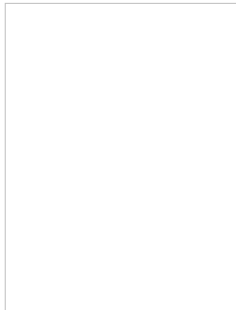
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