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Oklahoma governor signs order targeting transgender rights

BY BROOKE MIGDON - 08/02/23 11:22 AM ET

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(AP Photo/Sue Ogrocki, File)

FILE – Oklahoma Gov. Kevin Stitt addresses a campaign rally Nov. 1, 2022, in Oklahoma City. (AP Photo/Sue Ogrocki, File)

Oklahoma Gov. Kevin Stitt (R) signed an executive order Tuesday directing state agencies to adopt narrow definitions of “male” and

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“female” in a move that will roll back legal protections for transgender people in the state.

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Stitt’s executive order, known to its supporters as “The Women’s Bill of Rights,” defines “female” as a person “whose biological reproductive system is designed to produce ova,” and “male” as an individual “whose biological reproductive system is designed to fertilize the ova of a female.”

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Kansas, Tennessee, North Dakota and Montana this year similarly narrowed the definition of sex in state law to allow discrimination against transgender people. Such laws have been dubbed by LGBTQ rights groups as “LGBTQ Erasure Acts” because they attempt to write transgender and gender-nonconforming people out of as many areas of the law as possible.

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Tuesday in Oklahoma City, Stitt said the order, inspired by model legislation developed last year by the anti-transgender group Independent Women’s Voice, will prevent transgender women and girls from entering “women-only” spaces in Oklahoma, including restrooms and locker rooms.

“I am taking decisive executive action to ensure the true definition of the word woman, meaning a biological woman, is what guides the state as we reaffirm our commitment to ensuring the safety, dignity, and sanctity of women across Oklahoma,” Stitt said Tuesday. “As long as I’m governor, we will continue to protect women and ensure women-only spaces are reserved solely for biological women.”

Oklahoma law already bars transgender students from using restrooms and locker rooms consistent with their gender identity, and another

law signed by Stitt last year prevents transgender women and girls from playing on female sports teams.

Stitt in May gave final approval to legislation making it a felony crime for doctors to provide gender-affirming health care to transgender minors, but a binding agreement signed by the state's Republican attorney general later that month prevents Oklahoma officials from enforcing the ban, pending the outcome of a lawsuit filed by the American Civil Liberties Union.

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A 2021 executive order signed by Stitt bars transgender people from amending the gender listed on

their original birth certificates, and Stitt last year signed a bill prohibiting nonbinary gender markers on state-issued birth certificates.

Oklahoma Rep. [Mauree Turner](#), who in 2020 became the first openly nonbinary person elected to a state legislature, on Tuesday accused Stitt and the state government of silencing communities, including the transgender community, to avoid tackling real issues.

“I do wonder if Kevin Stitt ever gets tired of making a mockery, not only of the state, but also himself,” Turner [wrote in a post on X](#), the platform formerly known as Twitter. “This separate, and unequal executive order signed here in Oklahoma couldn’t be further disconnected with what Oklahoma[n]’s need.”

TAGS KEVIN STITT MAUREE TURNER
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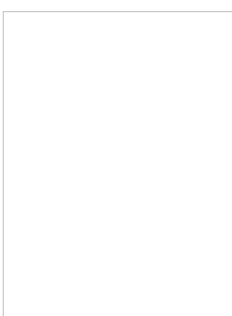
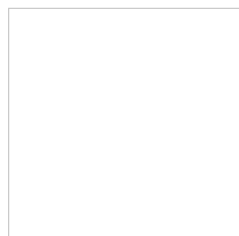
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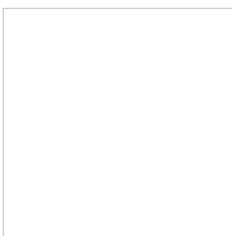
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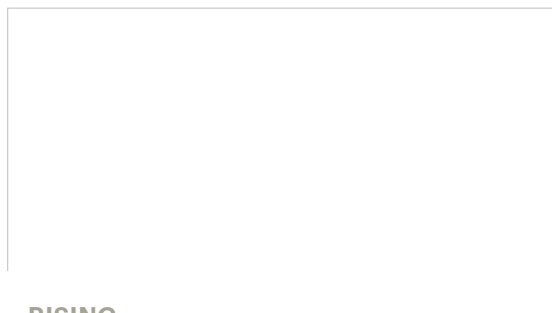
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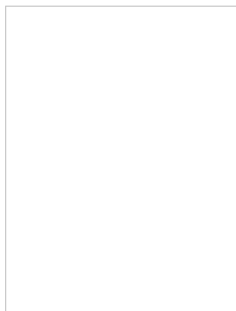
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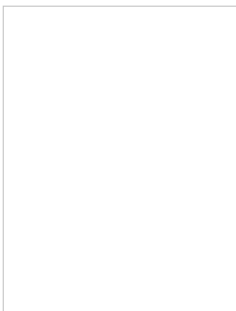
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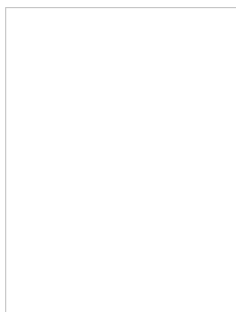
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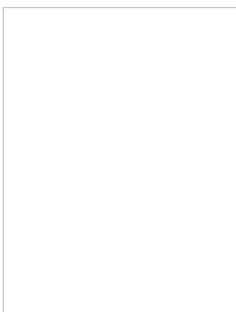
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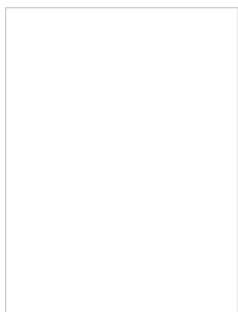
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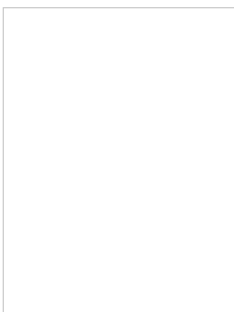
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