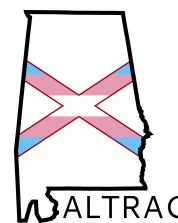


# PRESS RELEASE



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MONTGOMERY, Alabama (February 7, 2025) — This week, lawmakers in the Senate hurriedly voted through a bill that would make transgender people — and many non-transgender (“cisgender”) women — subject to harassment and assault in public bathrooms. The bill, which this year has resurfaced as Senate Bill 79 (SB79) and House Bill 107 (HB107), has been called the “Women’s Bill of Rights” by the out-of-state organization that authored it. This is despite the fact that the bill “does not grant women any rights,” as its sponsors have openly admitted in prior years, despite the fact that their party is beginning to dismantle equal employment protections for women nationally, and despite the fact that the current Republican presidential administration is weakening the ability of school-age girls to speak out against sexual assault.

SB79’s sponsor, Senator April Weaver, says the bill is a “protection act” for women’s “single sex spaces”, but failed to acknowledge that it would force transgender men, many of whom have full beards and deep voices (whom this bill defines as “female,” “woman,” and even “mothers”), into women’s restrooms and changing rooms. This oversight was pointed out to her in-person by Micah S. of Birmingham, a bearded transgender man (by Weaver’s definition, a woman) who testified in the bill’s committee hearing. “I could be targeted by bystanders who think I’m trying to harass the women in there, despite just trying to follow your law.” He added that **“this bill will not keep your daughters or wives safe, and will instead open them up to having their womanhood policed by strangers.”**

It would additionally put transgender women, many of whom have developed full breasts, at risk of sexual harassment and assault by requiring them to share intimate spaces with men. Katherine B. of Huntsville, a young transgender woman, illustrated this danger to Senator Weaver by recounting her experiences with harassment in men’s spaces. “I have been shunned, threatened, and sexually harassed by men, simply for trying to do the right thing,” said Katherine. **“In my attempt to avoid making other women uncomfortable, I sacrificed my own safety.”**

She and past sponsors of this bill also refused to acknowledge the inherent complexity of biological sex — that it is based on numerous factors, some of which are not immediately observable at birth, and that it is malleable — **despite being presented with multiple Ph.D. biologists in public hearings to explain this exact topic.** Her claim that this is only a “definitions” bill glosses over the fact that these definitions will modify every single law and policy in the entire state that mentions sex characteristics or gender.

The process legislators used to expedite the bill was questionable as well. Allison Montgomery, an ALTRAC volunteer, said that legislators “used an unfairly opaque and rushed process to discourage public input.” **Indeed, the legislation was introduced as a markedly different bill Tuesday afternoon,** scheduled that evening for a next-day committee meeting, and passed by that committee after a “substitution” process the following afternoon. Only three out of thirteen speakers opposing SB79 were permitted to speak, and for only one minute apiece. These speakers represented Alabama citizens who had traveled from every corner of the state. **The two lobbyists supporting the bill, Alabama Policy Institute and the Eagle Forum, somehow already had copies of the new legislation, while**

**opposing speakers were left to improvise and adapt their remarks to the sudden switch.** Despite this, Montgomery said she was “very grateful for the level of participation we saw — while this wasn’t the only bill up for hearing in that meeting, we filled three whole rooms at the State House with speakers and supporters, transgender people and our allies alike.”

The impact this bill would have on transgender Alabamians, who already face disproportionate amounts of discrimination in employment and housing, among other areas, would be extreme. Sponsors DuBose and Weaver have vaguely noted that the bill would “provide the courts with clarity,” while never expounding upon what legal clarity courts need in regard to a person’s gender or sex. Under the definitions given in this bill, transgender people would be punished on the grounds that they are not who they say they are, when they are merely trying to live their lives like anyone else.

Claiming that the bill would protect women’s spaces also ironically makes women’s spaces less safe for cisgender women. Recently at the U.S. Capitol, Representative Lauren Bobert stormed into a women’s bathroom to confront a woman she thought looked transgender. If law were backing the harassment she inflicted upon this woman, it could easily have been a police officer barging into the women’s room instead.

SB79 was already similar in purpose to HB107, the “What Is a Woman” Act — the two bills contained the same set of definitions with the exact same wording. In the committee hearing, and again on the Senate floor, Weaver claimed that the bill was *only* about definitions, despite the bill also containing language regarding gendered spaces in state agencies and entities. **She also claimed that the definitions in the bill were absolute and simple, despite definitions having changed from their initial version in 2023 (then House Bill 405) and the bill requiring thirty-five whole words to answer its title question.**

Senator Weaver drew upon the book of Genesis to back up her claims in committee. In response, Tris Wilson, a volunteer organizer with ALTRAC, said, “Lawmakers say that God made people like me to be men, but that’s just not true. Throughout my gender transition, God made it abundantly clear that I was on the right course — that I was created to be a woman, just on a different path than most. **Transition only brought me closer to God, and by advancing these bills, lawmakers are both denying that and turning a blind eye to the beauty and wonder of God’s whole creation, and that’s a shame.**”

ALTRAC hopes that all our lawmakers, especially ones like Sen. Weaver and Rep. DuBose, will sponsor legislation that addresses the needs of Alabama’s largely working-class constituency instead of endlessly legislating proxy issues and relying on scapegoating minorities to turn people out to the polls.

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ABOUT ALTRAC: The Alabama Transgender Rights Action Coalition provides information and contact tools to Alabama citizens concerned about legislative attacks on queer and transgender people.

<https://altrac.works>