

Attorney General Raoul Joins Coalitions Protecting Rights Of LGBTQ+ Students

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CHICAGO - Attorney General Kwame Raoul joined two separate coalitions of attorneys general supporting LGBTQ+ students against discrimination in the classroom, filing legal briefs opposing an Indiana school district's efforts to bar a transgender student from using the restroom consistent with the student's gender identity and against Florida's controversial "Don't Say Gay" law, which limits classroom discussions and has serious implications for LGBTQ+ students.

"Across the country, we are seeing increased attacks on the rights of LGBTQ+ youth," Raoul said. "Discrimination has no place in the classroom – period. I will continue to work with fellow attorneys general from across the country to stand up for the rights of all students and will vehemently oppose unjust policies that jeopardize the education and emotional and physical well-being of LGBTQ+ students."

Raoul joined a coalition of 22 attorneys general in filing an amicus brief in the case *A.C. v. Metropolitan School District of Martinsville* opposing the Indiana school district's efforts to bar a 13-year-old transgender male student from using the boys' restroom. [The](#)

[brief](#) — filed in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 7th Circuit — argues for the court to affirm a lower court ruling requiring the Metropolitan School District of Martinsville to allow the student to use the boys’ bathroom.

Raoul and the coalition argue that preventing a transgender student from using a school restroom consistent with the student’s gender identity violates Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 by denying transgender boys and girls access to the same common restrooms that other boys and girls may use. The amicus brief also points out that inclusive policies that maintain sex-segregated spaces while permitting transgender people to use a facility that aligns with their gender identity help to ease the stigma transgender people often experience, with positive effects for their educational and health outcomes. The attorneys’ general amicus brief demonstrates that protecting transgender people from discrimination yields broad benefits without compromising privacy or safety, and that nondiscriminatory restroom policies produce important benefits and pose no safety concerns.

Joining Raoul in filing the brief are the attorneys general of California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Hawaii, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont and Washington.

Raoul also joined a separate coalition of 16 attorneys general opposing Florida’s recently-enacted “Don’t Say Gay” law which prevents classroom discussion of sexual orientation or gender identity, posing a serious threat to LGBTQ+ students and families. Florida’s new law outlaws “classroom instruction” on sexual orientation or gender identity in kindergarten through the third grade, while also requiring the state education agency to write new classroom instructions for standards that must be followed by fourth through 12th grade teachers. The new law does not, however, define many of its key terms like “classroom instruction.” Out of an abundance of caution, Florida instructors have already begun censoring themselves, as the law allows a parent to bring a civil claim against a school district to enforce its vague prohibitions.

[Raoul and the coalition argue in their brief](#) that the Florida law is extreme and causes significant harms to students, parents, teachers and other states. The coalition notes non-inclusive educational environments have severe negative health impacts on LGBTQ+ students, resulting in increased rates of mental health disorders and suicide attempts. These harms extend to youth not just in Florida but throughout the country.

A group of students, parents, teachers, and organizations challenged the new law in federal district court, seeking to prevent its enforcement and alleging that it violates, among other things, the Equal Protection Clause and the First Amendment.

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