

IMPACT

■ LAMBDA
■ LEGAL

WINTER 2026



Lambda Legal at West Hollywood Pride 2025

LOOKING AHEAD

When I moved to San Francisco, I was searching for more than health care. I was searching for a reason to keep going. Access to services and support is not just important. It's lifesaving."

- Mx. Kiki Krunch, Client, San Francisco AIDS Foundation

Mx. Kiki's words reflect what is at stake for LGBTQ+ people and people living with HIV as we enter 2026.

We are one year into the second Trump administration, and the impact has been swift and severe. From the earliest days of this administration, federal actions targeted LGBTQ+ people, transgender communities, people living with HIV, and the organizations that serve them. These attacks have encouraged hostile state governments to move faster and go further in rolling back civil rights.

This political climate is deeply challenging. It is also one Lambda Legal knows well.

As the Trump administration advanced policies designed to erase protections and silence communities, we filed **seven federal lawsuits** to stop them. Many of those cases remain active. Some have already resulted in court-ordered injunctions that blocked harmful policies before they could take effect.

One of those seven cases protected the services of organizations like the San Francisco AIDS Foundation, where people like Mx. Kiki turn for care, stability, and hope. We won a victory in this case, restoring more than \$6 million in federal funding, allowing our client organizations like the SF AIDS Foundation to continue providing critical, life-saving care to our community.

LAMBDA LEGAL'S 2025 WINS

- **Challenged federal efforts to defund LGBTQ+ health and HIV research and essential services**, protecting community centers and organizations serving LGBTQ+ people nationwide.
- **Defended the right of transgender people to serve openly in the U.S. military**, confronting discriminatory bans and exclusions.
- **Fought book bans and classroom censorship** aimed at erasing LGBTQ+ history and silencing students, families, and educators.
- **Opposed executive orders that undermined diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility**, safeguarding programs critical to civil rights and equal opportunity.
- **Actively litigated in 24 states and Washington, D.C.**, advancing LGBTQ+ rights across the country.

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Our work in 2026 is shaped by what we have already seen. When harmful policies move fast, we must move faster. We will:

- **Aggressively litigate** cases filed in 2025 against the Trump administration and expand our legal efforts wherever new threats emerge.
- **Broaden our legal education work**, so people across the country know their rights and have access to clear, practical resources to stay safe.
- **Advance pro-LGBTQ+ policies in supportive states**, helping to create strongholds of protection where our communities can live and thrive, even as federal protections are challenged.

While we continue to respond to immediate threats, Lambda Legal is also building for the future. In the coming months, we'll share more about our new five-year strategic plan. This plan builds upon the momentum of our Unstoppable Future campaign and responds to the

current moment with conviction and commitment. We are investing in our Legal and Policy teams and designing strategies to secure protections that will withstand shifting political landscapes.

This work goes beyond any single lawsuit or administration. By deepening partnerships with community organizations and advocates, we are strengthening our ability to protect LGBTQ+ people and everyone living with HIV for the long term.

The victories we pursue today are about tomorrow. They are about ensuring that people like Mx. Kiki, and her community, can continue to live with dignity, safety, and hope.



Mx. Kiki Krunch

Fighting for the T IN TEAM

In the coming months, you will probably hear a lot of conversation about transgender youth and their participation in school sports. At Lambda Legal we know that young people have the right to play sports on the team that aligns with their gender.

When people ask why trans youth in sports matter, the answer begins with what school athletics have always provided. Sports teach perseverance after a loss, teamwork during difficult moments, and confidence that extends far beyond the field. Success has never depended on a single factor. It is shaped by coaching, mindset, sleep, nutrition, and circumstances no one can fully control. Win or lose, the lasting value of sports is found in the lessons young people carry with them long after the game ends. Trans youth deserve access to those same opportunities.



Becky Pepper-Jackson

HOW TO BE AN ALLY TO TRANS ATHLETES

- **Start with shared values.** Remind people that sports are about teamwork, confidence, and belonging—not just scoreboards.
- **Respond with curiosity.** If concerns about fairness or safety come up, ask questions that invite reflection rather than debate.
- **Center what's at stake.** Excluding trans youth means denying them joy, growth, and community their peers receive.
- **Affirm reality.** Trans athletes have always been part of our schools and teams.



Explore the full **Lambda Legal Trans Youth in Sports Conversation Guide** and learn how to show up with clarity and compassion.

Misconceptions About Fairness

Much of the debate about transgender youth participating on the sports team that match their gender is framed around fairness, but that question is often asked without listening to the students most affected. In states like New Jersey and California, inclusive policies have been in place for years, some for more than a decade. Schools have not experienced the disruption critics predicted. Instead, students have participated in sports alongside their peers without any issues.

This conversation is not about elite competitions or professional athletics.

It is about children. What matters most is whether a child feels accepted, supported, and able to belong. And we have already seen that gender policing harms not just transgender students, but all students who are perceived as gender nonconforming by others. When a student is told they do not belong because of who they are, it hurts everyone, and the harm extends well beyond the season. When students are affirmed, every part of the team becomes stronger and communities more connected.



Title IX

For more than fifty years, Title IX has expanded opportunity in school sports by prioritizing inclusion over exclusion. Its success has come from opening doors, not closing them, and from recognizing that fairness is not achieved by singling out or scrutinizing children. Excluding trans students would undermine that legacy and replace opportunity with fear.

Becky Pepper-Jackson at the Supreme Court

These values were at the center of the January 13th oral arguments in *B.P.J. v. West Virginia Department of Education*. At the U.S. Supreme Court in Washington, Lambda Legal joined partners from the ACLU and Legal Voice to argue that laws banning transgender youth from school sports violate both the Equal Protection Clause and Title IX. Outside the Court, hundreds of supporters gathered for the **Fight for the T in Team rally**, where transgender athletes, families, civil rights leaders, members of Congress, and community advocates spoke about why inclusion in sports matters. Inside the courtroom, Our



Becky Pepper-Jackson with her mother Heather

counsel emphasized that excluding transgender students from the opportunity to compete with their peers inflicts real harm and sends a message of exclusion, not equality. Thousands of people across the country watched as this historic fight for fairness and dignity was laid out

before the highest court in the land, with a decision expected this summer.

At its core, this issue is about ensuring that no child is pushed to the margins. School sports should remain a place where every student has the chance to participate, learn, and thrive.

Justice Fund Donors Sustain Lambda Legal



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We need Lambda Legal to fight on our behalf as the current government is determined to whittle away our right to marry, express ourselves freely, and ensure equal treatment under the law.

Melita and Rachel

“Lambda Legal is on the front lines of every LGBTQ+ battle,” wrote new recurring donors Melita and Rachel. “We need Lambda Legal to fight on our behalf as the current government is determined to whittle away our right to marry, express ourselves freely, and ensure equal treatment under the law.” Melita, a retired Colonel in the U.S. military, added, “I have also witnessed your support for LGBTQ+ members of our military. You are making an impact. You are difference makers.”

In 2025, as attacks on LGBTQ+ people and everyone living with HIV grew more frequent and more vicious, it became clear that the fight for justice is not won in a day. At Lambda Legal, defending our communities takes persistence, careful planning, and steady support. That is why new donors, especially recurring donors who join our Justice Fund, are vital to this work.

Many imagine major legal battles as brief moments that end with a single court appearance or a Supreme Court decision, but the truth is that justice unfolds slowly,

over years. Cases demand sustained legal strategy, dedicated staff, and long-term financial stability. Take *B.P.J. vs West Virginia Department of Education*. This case began with Lambda Legal in 2022 and was heard before the Supreme Court on January 13, 2026, showing how long and complex the path to justice can be.

Throughout 2025, Lambda Legal proved it is needed for the long haul. Through the Justice Fund, recurring donors provide the steady, reliable support that allows the organization to stay in the fight from the first filing to the final ruling. Their commitment makes it possible to stand for people who need it most, including LGBTQ+ individuals affected by criminal justice involvement and those most harmed by discriminatory laws.

Thanks to donors like Melita and Rachel, Lambda Legal can continue showing up case after case, year after year. Their generosity ensures the strength and stability necessary to defend our communities today and protect their rights well into the future.



Everyday, we
are in court,
fighting back.

But we don't do
it alone.

ALL RISE



Winning our cases takes time and resources. Join us as a member of our Justice Fund with a monthly or quarterly donation. Together, we'll defend the rights of our community and fight for justice and equality.

Make your commitment today.

