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# Trans rights activists hold sit-in at Capitol to protest Johnson's bathroom ban

written by Chris Walker, Truthout  
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**“Everyone deserves to use the restroom without fear of discrimination or violence,” an organizer of the protest said.**



Pro-transgender rights activists with the Gender Liberation Movement protest in the House Cannon building and face subsequent arrests on December 5, 2024, in Washington, D.C.

Dozens of transgender activists and their allies demonstrated at the U.S. Capitol on Thursday, staging a sit-in inside a public restroom in defiance of a new policy enacted by Republican Speaker of the House Mike Johnson.

[Johnson implemented the policy two weeks ago](#), preempting plans from Rep. Nancy Mace (R-South Carolina) to force a bill to the House floor to formally ban transgender people from using restrooms that correspond with their gender inside the Capitol building. Mace's planned bill [was a direct attack on incoming Rep. Sarah McBride \(D-Delaware\)](#), who is set to be the first openly trans lawmaker to serve in Congress.

McBride opposed the measure and the moves by Johnson, but chose not to focus on

the issue, stating that she viewed the transphobic actions as a distraction.

"I'm not here to fight about bathrooms," [she said in a statement](#).

McBride also derided Mace's attacks against her, [saying at the time that it was proof](#) that Republicans "have no real solutions to what Americans are facing."

"We should be focused on bringing down the cost of housing, health care, and child care, not manufacturing culture wars," she said.

The act of civil disobedience on Thursday was organized by the Gender Liberation Movement (GLM) and took place in a restroom near Johnson's office. Protesters, including transgender advocate Chelsea Manning, directed their action not only at Republicans, but [also Democrats](#), condemning the party for not doing enough to defend McBride's rights.

"Speaker Johnson, Nancy Mace, our genders are no debate!" one chant from the demonstrators stated.

"Democrats, grow a spine, trans lives are on the line!" another chant asserted.

[embedpress]<https://x.com/AnnaLissRoy/status/1864748640436162561>[/embedpress]

Mace responded to the action by posting a video of herself on social media in which she [used a slur against transgender people](#) to describe the protesters.

Multiple studies show that Mace, who claims that cisgender women's safety is at risk if transgender women are allowed to use the same restrooms, is wrong in her bigoted assessments — indeed, [a study from UCLA found that there is no evidence](#) of any adverse effects of trans-inclusive policies in public restrooms.

Around 15 individuals [were arrested for the protest](#). They were arrested not because

they violated the restroom policy, but because of a Washington, D.C. ordinance against “crowding, obstructing or incommoding,” according to reporting from *Axios*.

GLM co-founder Raquel Willis [issued a statement regarding the demonstration](#), noting that transphobic fearmongering and attacks on trans people at the Capitol came following “nearly \$200 million of attack ads [that] were disseminated across the United States” during the 2024 campaign.

“Everyone deserves to use the restroom without fear of discrimination or violence. Trans folks are no different,” [Willis said](#). “We deserve dignity and respect and we will fight until we get it.”

Source: [Truthout](#)

