

We must not look away: The escalating targeting of trans people

written by Lexi Webster
December 27, 2025



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December 23 — I was sitting at my desk when a headline hit my inbox “[HHS bans trans youth care, blocks virtually all US hospitals from performing medicine for](#)

[trans people under 18.](#)” It was midday, my coffee had grown cold, and my heart dropped into my stomach. There was no shock, just a familiar, sinking feeling. Another escalation. Another supposed red line crossed. Another drop in a sea of reminders that the attacks we’ve endured in the recent years are neither anomalous nor abstract — they’re relentless, [coordinated](#), and growing in frequency. And though it arrived quietly in my inbox, it will soon appear loudly in our lives.

The Department of Health and Human Services’ chilling new regulatory actions seeking to impose a ban on trans healthcare (that HHS refers to as “sex-rejecting procedures”) for youth is the latest manifestation of the Trump administration’s violent, despotic position on trans youth. Per the [Associated Press](#), the goal of the proposals is to: “restrict the use of puberty blockers, hormone therapy and surgical interventions for transgender children — include cutting off federal Medicaid and Medicare funding from hospitals that provide gender-affirming care to children and prohibiting federal Medicaid dollars from being used to fund such procedures.”

Twenty-seven states already have laws restricting or banning trans healthcare for youth. Only 15 have protections in place.

This is an established tactic of this regime: [unconstitutionally weaponizing federal funding cuts to bully states and institutions into compliance](#), forcing them to choose between defending basic human dignity and crucial, often life-saving, funding needed to care for their constituents—a farcical Trump-era trolley problem. Like clockwork, the administration fires up state-sponsored propaganda machines to turn marginalized people against their neighbors through misinformation and fearmongering. The result? When it comes to trans folks, few if any officials hold the line and call his bluff.

As we know, trans healthcare is medically necessary, age-appropriate, and extremely safe and is backed by decades of research and supported by every major medical association (the American Medical Association, the American Psychiatric

Association, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, the World Medical Association, and the World Health Organization, to name a few). Gender affirming surgical procedures are not new and are widely known to have lower regret rates than elective surgery operations (e.g. plastic surgery, knee replacements) and major non-surgical life decisions (e.g. tattoos or having children).

Every trans adult that you know today is here not by chance but through sheer grit; we were all once trans children and youth who at different points in our lives fought uphill battles against systems and institutions to receive the care that we need to exist in a country that increasingly wishes to see us [genocided](#).

Trump's anti-trans [executive orders](#) received a fair amount of attention, and but they were only the beginning of a steady onslaught. It's difficult to understate just how bad things are (and how quickly they're gaining momentum). In the past few weeks alone:

- [Bills were passed by the House of Representatives](#) attempting to make providing trans healthcare a **felony punishable by up to 10 years in prison** and to [block Medicaid funding of that care](#).
- The [FDA issued a warning letter to businesses selling gender-affirming clothing](#) (specifically, binders that help trans masculine people flatten their chests without surgical interventions) accusing them of selling misbranded "medical devices" and subjecting them to expensive audits and threatening them with "regulatory action."
- [U.S. Attorney General Pam Bondi issued a memo to the FBI](#) directing them to establish cash bounties for trans activists (i.e. "for information that leads to the successful identification and arrest of individuals in the leadership of domestic terrorist organizations" who promote [radical gender ideology](#)).
- Texas Republican Attorney General Ken Paxton is reported to be quietly

[compiling a list of people who have changed their gender markers on state identification](#) (and it's doubtful he's the only one).

- Lawyers defending anti-trans legislation are pushing out briefs at breakneck pace and using [AI hallucinations to fabricate cases that justify their claims](#).
- News outlets are providing cover to Trump's accusations that trans people are "[nihilistic violent extremists](#)" by uncritically publishing comments that "[powerful hormones](#)" can act as an "[accelerant](#)" for instability and violence.
- The DOJ has notified prisons that it is [revising the Prison Rape Elimination Act standards](#) and they will no longer be audited for the safety regulations related to incarcerated trans and intersex folks.
- After [SCOTUS intervened to allow the Trump administration to enforce its anti-trans passport policy](#), the State Department updated the FAQ on its [Sex Marker in Passports](#) page with new language suggesting that the federal government may have the power to invalidate **all** trans passports:

Is my passport still valid if I have an X marker on it, or if it lists a sex other than my sex at birth?

All passports are valid for travel until they expire, are replaced by the applicant, or are invalidated pursuant to federal regulations.

And this is just recent memory — there is so much more. There's a whole Wikipedia page for [Persecution of transgender people under the second Trump administration](#) documenting the phenomenon.

I know many can relate because this is not unique to the trans community, as there are so many communities under threat inside and outside of this empire, but we need you to understand and internalize that trans people in this country, myself included, are under relentless psychic (and sometimes physical) attacks and chronic stress. We are [fearing for our lives](#), the safety and wellbeing of our loved ones, friends, and community — and not just in places like Texas and Florida — but

nationwide. Nobody I know is well right now.

This administration knows that if they can't kill us directly (yet), that if they inundate the public with enough anti-trans rhetoric, they can propagandize and deputize anyone who might wish to cause us harm.

And if not that, they'll slowly kill us through prolonged exposure to distress: fight or flight hormones, long-term exposure to elevated cortisol levels, and feelings of powerlessness and hopelessness that enable [a crisis of mental health](#) that has claimed so many, including some of my loved ones this year.

Trans death is on the rise: A4TE's [Trans Day of Remembrance report](#) highlighted the 58 trans people we lost this year that we know of. Twenty-seven were lost to interpersonal violence (the majority of whom were Black, trans women) and 21 to suicide (61 percent were trans youth ages 15-24). We often say that "the cruelty is the point" — but, more specifically, the cruelty is killing us.

How do we quantify the many ways in which our bodies internalize the trauma of surviving in a country filled with complete strangers who want trans people, and specifically trans women, dead?

I don't have words of inspiration or encouragement. I simply urge you to not turn away, put on blinders, give in to tunnel vision, or otherwise ignore the coordinated campaign taking place to erase and eradicate trans people from public life. We've passed most of the stages of genocide: classification, dehumanization, polarization, discrimination, persecution, and preparation — what's next?

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Source: [CCR](#)

