SECURING RIGHTS, SHAPING THE FUTURE

LGBTQIA+ RIGHTS

CAPSULE THREE | **SECTION 3** | **AUGUST 3RD - AUGUST 16TH 2026**

OVERVIEW

Our third policy focus for our third capsule, *Securing Rights, Shaping the Future*, is NOW's commitment to LGBTQIA+ Rights. NOW has been dedicated to fighting discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity in all areas.

FOUNDATIONS

LGBTQIA+ (Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender/Queer/Intersex/Asexual) rights are one of NOW's six core issues. We are dedicated to combating discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity, including in areas of employment, housing, public accommodations, health services, child custody and military policies.

We assert the rights of all LGBTQIA+ individuals to live their lives with dignity, security, and marriage equality for all. NOW advocates for all women, including trans women, to have equitable treatment in the courts, in the workforce, in healthcare, and in our communities.

ACHIEVEMENTS

NOW Co-Founder Pauli Murray advocated for including the word "sex" in the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which would make sex discrimination unconstitutional. On June 15, 2020, the Supreme Court ruled in favor of LGBTQ+ employees and ruled that workplace discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender is unconstitutional, with their opinion hinging on the word "sex" in the 1964 Civil Rights Act.

NOW has joined and led numerous marches supporting LGBTQIA+ rights for decades, including 1978's Gay Freedom Day march and 2009's National Equality March. Hundreds of thousands of marchers demanded that LGBTQIA+ people be able to serve openly in the military.

NOW was a leader in opposing efforts to amend the U.S. Constitution to define marriage as between only a man and a woman. In the mid-2000s, NOW launched a campaign of advocacy and litigation supporting full marriage equality before the general election.

NOW's Political Action Committee regularly conducts voter education and get–out–the–vote efforts across the country to ensure that leaders who support LGBTQIA+ rights get elected to office.

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LEGISLATION

NOW actively monitors and supports federal legislation aimed at expanding LGBTQIA+ Rights, including:
HR 6151/S 2180: Global Respect Act

NOW **opposes** federal legislation aimed at expanding LGBTQIA+ Rights, including:
HR 1028: Protection of Women in Olympic and Amateur Sports Act of 2026
HR 498: Do No Harm in Medicaid Act
HR 3492: Protect Children's Innocence Act
HR 3950: Truth in Gender Act of 2025
HR 8781: Title IX Clarification Act of 2026
HR 7651: Chloe Cole Act of 2026

TODAY

Today, NOW stays focused on LGBTQIA+ Priorities such as passing the Equality Act, ending attacks on transgender athletes, enforcing Title IX's protections, and stopping state-sponsored hate.

While we celebrate each win, we know that well-funded and dangerous extremists want to push back all of this hard-won progress.

Hateful laws targeting students' gender identity abound at the state level, with some even amending their constitutions to limit rights and protections for LGBTQIA+ people, particularly transgender youth.

Until justice is ours, we will keep fighting for LGBTQIA+ rights.

Until all of us are equal, none of us are equal. The rollback of LGBTQIA+ rights and extremist politicians' vile treatment of the transgender community are unacceptable and must be stopped through legislative actions and accountability at the ballot box.

It is with immeasurable pride that NOW celebrates the many courageous activists whose accomplishments shaped our world for the better. We will continue to stand with the LGBTQIA+ community through every challenge, and celebrate every victory until we truly have equality for all.

"True community is based upon equality, mutuality, and reciprocity. It affirms the richness of individual diversity as well as the common human ties that bind us together."

– NOW Co-Founder Dr. Pauli Murray