



Equality of Rights Under the Law:

The Need for and Feasibility of a Citizen-Led
Equal Rights Amendment in Ohio

November, 2024

Contents

Contents.....	1
Section 1: Intro about Equality of Rights Under the Law.....	2
Introduction.....	2
Who would this Amendment Protect?.....	2
Section 2: Harms of Not Passing Anti-Discrimination Policy.....	6
Impact of Discrimination on the Health and Wellbeing of Ohioans.....	6
Impacts of Discriminatory Laws on Ohio’s Population.....	7
Financial Impacts.....	10
Section 3: Success Stories of Similar Policy.....	12
Non-Discrimination Ordinances in Ohio.....	12
Other States with ERAs.....	13
Equality of Rights Under the Law Compared to Other State ERAs.....	13
Section 4: Why to Pursue a Constitutional Amendment via Citizens Ballot Initiative.....	16
Protecting Civil Rights from Changes in Legislative and Judicial Bodies.....	16
Need for Additional Non-discrimination Policy.....	17
Ohio’s Citizen-Led Ballot Initiatives.....	18
Support for Protection Against Discrimination.....	20
Support Among Ohioans.....	20
Nevada: A Test Case for Ohio.....	21
Labor Unions and Equal Rights Policies.....	22
Conclusion.....	24
References.....	25

Section 1: Intro about Equality of Rights Under the Law

Introduction

Equality of Rights Under the Law is an Equal Rights Amendment to be enshrined in the Ohio Constitution via a Citizen Ballot Initiative. The initiative began in January 2024 in response to the wave of anti-trans legislation in Ohio. However, its impact goes beyond impacting transgender Ohioans. The need for a broad anti-discrimination policy on the state level is more pressing than ever as the current U.S. Supreme Court overturns precedents protecting civil rights federally at an alarming rate.

The initiative protects against discrimination by the state legislature and local municipalities. The types of discrimination it protects against include that based on race, color, creed or religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, pregnancy status, genetic information, age, disability, recovery status, familial status, ancestry, national origin, or military status. Further protected categories may also be added before certification. Additionally, the initiative includes language to overturn the same-sex marriage ban in Ohio's constitution, which would go back into effect if the U.S. Supreme Court overturned federal protections.

Who would this Amendment Protect?

The number of Ohioans whose rights would be protected under this amendment would be immense. Although ERAs have historically been associated with Women's Rights, and this amendment would also protect all Ohio women from discriminatory laws, the impacts will be even farther reaching.

According to the Movement Advancement Project, Ohio is home to 462,000 LGBTQ Ohioans over 13 years of age (Movement Advancement Project, 2024).

However, other data suggests that this statistic may be higher. According to The Williams Institute Report, 557,600 adults in Ohio identify as LGBTQ, which equals 6.2 percent of the population (Flores & Conron, 2023). Notably, statistics on LGBTQ populations are limited to those who are willing to disclose that they are LGBTQ, which can be reduced by many factors (White, 2020), meaning that the actual percentage is likely higher than those reported.

Protection from racial discrimination would also impact a significant number of Ohioans. The 2020 Federal Census reports that Ohio is home to 30,720 First Nations American residents, 1,478,781 Black or African American residents, 5,034 Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander residents, 521,308 Hispanic or Latino residents, 224,344 residents who identified as a race or ethnicity not named on the census, and 681,372 residents who identified as two or more races (Bureau, 2020). A total of 23% of Ohioans identify as a race other than white alone and would benefit from protections from race and ethnicity-based discrimination. Notably, Census data tend to underreport populations of historically marginalized groups. The Federal Census Bureau revealed that the 2020 Census, in particular, undercounted Black, Native American, and Latino Americans (Khubba et al., 2022). This means that the number of Ohioans who would be protected by these protections would likely be even higher.

Furthermore, the CDC reports that 31.1% of Ohioans have a disability (CDC, 2024) meaning that over a third of the state's population would benefit from protections against disability-based discrimination.

The census also reports that 18.4% of Ohio's residents, or 2,213,997 people, are 65 or older and would benefit from protection against age-based discrimination (Bureau, 2020).

4.9% of Ohio's population are immigrants and would be protected from discrimination based on "national origin" (American Immigration Council, 2024).

Veterans makeup 6.5% of Ohioans (Bureau, 2020) and would also come under protection from discrimination with this amendment.

The protection for “recovery status” is also significant for Ohioans who have been touched by addiction. Some sources estimate that “almost 700,000 Ohio residents ages 12 and above require drug rehabilitation services and treatment every year” even when excluding treatment needed for prescription and medication misuse (White Light Behavioral Health, 2024).

Protections for religion and creed would also impact a significant portion of the population. 73% of Ohioans identify with some denomination of Christianity, and 27% of Ohioans identify with an affiliation other than Christianity or as unaffiliated with any religion (Pew Research Center, 2024), meaning that 27% of the state is a minority based on their religion or lack thereof.

The full number of people who would be protected under “pregnancy status” is difficult to estimate because most public health institutions do not publish the total number of pregnancies per year in Ohio. However, by compiling other pregnancy-related figures, we can understand how many people would be covered under these protections. In 2022, there were 128,231 live births in Ohio (March of Dimes, 2022) and 18,488 abortions were reported for the same year (Ohio Department of Health, 2023). At least 10-20% of pregnancies end in miscarriage, though this percentage may be higher because many people miscarry before they realize that they are pregnant (Mayo Clinic, 2023). If the total of live births represents 80% of pregnancies that do not end in miscarriages, then total pregnancies, assuming a 20% miscarriage rate and adding abortions, were closer to 178,776.75 in 2022.

However, this amendment is written not just to protect those who are historically marginalized based on one or more of the listed characteristics, it would also protect their families, based on the inclusion of “familial status.” Although it is difficult to know the full impact, we know that it does greatly expand the number of Ohioans who would benefit from it. For example, there are currently no laws that protect Ohio’s children of LGBTQ families from discrimination except for general “anti-bullying” laws, but research shows that Children of LGBTQ families can face both interpersonal and structural stigma in schools (Goldberg, 2024).

Likewise, 268,300, or 2.4% of U.S.-born Ohioans have at least one immigrant parent (American Immigration Council, 2024), and discrimination based on the

characteristics of a child's family is of concern. There is substantial documentation that "immigrant youth are often marginalized and experience discrimination, ridicule and rejection by native-born peers and may be at higher risk for bullying victimization due to both direct and indirect factors" (Maynard et al., 2016), and research suggests that this is also true for second-generation immigrants, or the children of immigrants and that school policies can exacerbate discrimination (Karakus et al., 2023). Anti-discrimination policy like this amendment would be a significant step in protecting family members, especially children.

Section 2: Harms of Not Passing Anti-Discrimination Policy

Impact of Discrimination on the Health and Wellbeing of Ohioans

Discriminatory laws have profound effects on the health and well-being of our Ohio communities. In the past decades, research has consistently shown that the effects of social stress, like discrimination, have an immense impact on the mental health, physical health, and overall well-being of marginalized populations (Williams 2019). Mental health impacts of discrimination, in particular, have been well documented. A 2016 study that examined mental health outcomes of minoritized populations based on their experiences of discrimination found that, while each population faced unique challenges, “perceived day-to-day discrimination is a social stressor, and systematic exposure is likely to have long-lasting repercussions on mental health outcomes across all status categories” (Everett et al., 2016).

However, these impacts are not simply the result of beliefs and attitudes, they are also directly related to the protection of rights in policy or lack thereof. This is especially true in the case of healthcare access. A 2022 study found that major mental health disorders, suicidal ideation, and problems with substance abuse were all significantly decreased among transgender people who began hormone treatment as adolescents compared to those who began as adults. Both groups who had received hormone treatment had significantly better mental health outcomes compared to those who wanted to begin hormone treatment but were unable to (Turban et al., 2022). While we know that discrimination is a threat to all minoritized Ohioans, these policies literally have life-and-death implications for our transgender Ohioans.

The impacts of discrimination-related stress are not limited to mental health and can also manifest in physical health. These impacts are particularly harrowing when looking at the impact of discrimination on the death rates of

Black birthing parents. Data from 1999 to 2019 showed that while Black women have higher than average pregnancy and birth-related deaths nationwide, a Black woman in Ohio is more than five times as likely to die from pregnancy complications than the average across American states (Fleszar et al., 2023). Experiences of racism and sexism faced by Black women are cited as a substantial contributor to significantly higher Black maternal mortality rates than the average population, even when controlling for racism by the specific hospital staff. Several studies have explored reasons for this impact, including chronic stress contributing to hypertension, a precursor to eclampsia and early death, and connections between inflammation and anxiety induced by social adversity (Tyler, 2022). These findings signify that Ohio's failure to address discrimination on a broad level is contributing to the death of Black women and birthing parents, especially given the comparison to other states.

Many populations impacted by this proposed amendment have not had significant research dedicated to understanding the specific impacts of interpersonal and institutional discrimination on their well-being. However, the research that exists, suggests that these negative impacts can be severe. Research from Australia examining the impacts of disability-based discrimination was a prevalent determinant of health for people with disabilities and that "the higher levels of discrimination they experience are likely to contribute to the poor social and economic outcomes" (Krnjacki et al, 2018, p. 173).

These impacts are also particularly prominent in populations that are already at risk for health and income disparities. Several studies looking at U.S. military veterans point to identity-based discrimination as having significantly impacted the mental health outcomes or ability to recover from trauma (Nillni et al, 2023; Livingston et al, 2019).

Impacts of Discriminatory Laws on Ohio's Population

According to Ohio's 2023 Population Projections Report: "Ohio's population is projected to decline by approximately 675,000 (5.7%) by 2050 if current rates of fertility, mortality, and migration remain unchanged" (Ohio, 2023). Due to Ohio's

population trends, including stagnant migration, declining fertility rates, and an aging population. “Official state projections show we could lose 675,000 people or 5.7% of our residents by 2050, while the United States grows by 17%” (Columbus Dispatch Editorial Board, 2024). The state will continue to see increasingly severe and rapid population decline in the coming decades unless it can mitigate push factors out of the state.

However, discriminatory laws pose a substantial threat to future net migration. Within less than 72 hours of Ohio’s legislature overturning the Governor’s veto on laws prohibiting transgender minors from receiving gender-affirming care, over 100 families applied for emergency financial assistance from Trans Ohio to move out of the state (Trau, 2024). The total number of transgender people and their families moving out of the state is currently unknown. Still, other reports indicate this could become an even more significant trend as discriminatory laws continue to be passed. The Hill reported in February 2024 that half of transgender Americans have considered moving to another state because of anti-LGBTQ laws (Migdon, 2024).

Trans Ohioans are not the only ones who have felt forced to leave the state due to escalated discrimination and vilification. After Donald Trump won the 2024 election, many Haitian residents, who had already experienced massive waves of terror and harassment after being targeted during Trump’s campaign, began to flee the state to politically friendlier ones and even Canada (Starr, 2024). Although immigration policy is set primarily by the federal government, states and localities have an immense impact on immigrants’ experiences. The fear of deportation and violence among Haitian residents has been significantly impacted by state and local actors, including one sheriff instructing police to go after arresting Haitian immigrants en masse (Starr, 2024). Moreover, it is clear to these communities that Ohio is not a place that can currently offer them protection from discrimination and identity-based violence, even compared to other states.

The impact of discrimination on marginalized Ohioans is particularly intense in rural areas, and the loss of community members is particularly devastating even for those left behind. A recent report found that 77% of Ohio’s rural counties have fewer people of working age than 20 years ago. “These demographic headwinds challenge the quality of life for all residents, forcing communities to

stretch limited resources and make difficult choices. Small-town parks, community centers, and sports leagues have fewer people each year. Schools are closing. Retail businesses are struggling to keep the lights on. Sunday congregations are dwindling in size. (FWD.us, 2023).

However several sources point to immigration as having saved or being able to save declining rural communities. “In the vast majority of rural areas experiencing population decline, immigration has played a key role in mitigating this trend” (Ajilore & Willingham, 2019) Although immigrants have become the “life-blood” of many rural communities, representing one-fifth of their population growth across the United States, many immigrants face structural and policy challenges in rural areas, particularly in education.

Immigrants are not the only populations who make up critical components of rural communities but face increased barriers as minorities access institutions. LGBTQ people in rural areas often face “discrimination or exclusion from key social institutions. These factors likely contribute to the higher rate of poverty among small-town and rural households with same-sex couples compared with their different-sex counterparts” (Ajilore & Willingham, 2019).

Likewise, rural residents with disabilities can face significant structural barriers, particularly when trying to access health care. Despite a higher disability rate in rural areas compared to the U.S. as a whole, “disabled Americans who live in rural areas also tend to receive support services that are more expensive and less specialized than disabled residents of urban communities” (Ajilore & Willingham, 2019).

Though typically not thought of as diverse, rural areas are home to “sizable populations of people of color; immigrants; LGBTQ people, including LGBTQ people of color; and disabled people who live in rural areas. The structural and social barriers to prosperity for marginalized Americans in rural areas must be addressed in order to ensure that economic development in these areas is truly progressive.” It is critical that marginalized populations have protections from discrimination that can worsen the quality of life and job opportunities, both for the survival of rural communities and for the well-being of the diverse populations living in them.

Financial Impacts

Notably, LGBTQ Ohioans represent 5% of the workforce, even in estimates that show them making up less than 5% of the population, and 30% are raising children in Ohio (Movement Advancement Project, 2024). Immigrants in Ohio paid \$7 billion in taxes in 2022 (American Immigration Council, 2024). This means that population losses can have immense impacts on the economy of the entire state. Additionally, federal funding is allocated based on Census data, meaning that decreases in Ohio's population will eventually result in less funding for state and local infrastructure (Project on Government Oversight, 2023).

However, discriminatory laws can also come with even more direct financial costs. Other states that passed earlier laws discriminating against transgender residents have already seen severe financial losses. Following the passage of a 2016 "bathroom bill," which required people to use the restroom of their assigned sex at birth, North Carolina saw at least 1,250 jobs lost and 550 jobs put at risk. Additionally, the state lost \$4.8 billion in federal grants and contracts, including \$4.7 billion for education. These losses do not include litigation costs following the law's passage (Mallory & Sears, 2016).

Furthermore, consumer, entertainer, and business boycotts are reported to have cost North Carolina \$3.76 billion (GLAAD, 2023). The losses in the state resulting from the law were so significant that by 2017, lawmakers had rolled it back (Prichep, 2024). Similarly, "in 2017, Texas lost \$66m in meetings and conventions just over the bathroom bill," and it was projected that the state would have potentially lost \$1.3 billion if the law had passed (GLAAD, 2023).

Similar impacts are likely in other states, including Ohio. GLAAD reports that the April 2021 PBS NewsHour/NPR/Marist poll showed that 66% of Americans oppose anti-trans state healthcare bans, 67% oppose anti-trans state sports bans, and Republicans oppose anti-trans healthcare bans more than any other group, at 70% (GLAAD, 2023).

On the other hand, states with robust equal rights protections tend to attract more businesses and workers. The Equality Act, supported by a coalition of over 530 major companies, aims to provide consistent non-discrimination protections, highlighting the broad business support for inclusive policies. This

support underscores the economic benefits of such protections, which include attracting top talent and ensuring a diverse and inclusive workplace (Human Rights Campaign, 2023). Moreover, sustainable and impact investing trends show that businesses increasingly consider environmental, social, and governance factors when making investment decisions. States with inclusive policies are better positioned to attract these investments, as they align with the growing corporate emphasis on social responsibility (SIF, 2020).

These advances are manifested in tangible impacts. In 2016, it was found that states with employment nondiscrimination policies to protect LGBTQ employment rights are more likely to be innovative, as measured by patents and patent citations (Gao & Zhang, 2017). Firms with LGBT-supportive policies in states with laws barring anti-LGBT discrimination also have higher firm value and profitability (Pichler et al., 2017).

To be clear, the impact on the well-being of populations protected by this amendment and the principle of protecting civil rights should be far greater priorities than the benefits those populations provide to the state population and economy. However, even those who are not directly targeted by discrimination will be affected by the loss of Ohioan communities because of discrimination and by the weakening of our workforce.

Section 3: Success Stories of Similar Policy

Non-Discrimination Ordinances in Ohio

Within Ohio, positive examples of LGBTQ non-discrimination ordinances can be observed locally at little cost. These include the following municipalities:

- Westerville, Ohio, has not reported discrimination cases since passing (Fourquarean, 2024).
- Newark, Ohio, has also had zero reports of discrimination and no increase in city expenditures due to the nondiscrimination ordinance based on 2022 data (Moore, 2024).
- Worthington, Ohio, has had zero reports of discrimination and no increase in city expenditures due to the nondiscrimination ordinance (Lindsey, 2024).
- Bexley, Ohio, has a nondiscrimination ordinance in response to discriminatory behavior by a photographer and has also had zero reports of discrimination since 2014/2015 and no increased expenditures since its passing (Fischel, 2024).
- Lakewood, Ohio, has had a total of five complaints since 2023, three based on racial discrimination and two based on disability. The total expenditures from these cases, audits, and training totaled \$3,800 (Swallow, 2024).
- Athens, Ohio, received four complaints in 2022 and 2024, none of which were prosecuted, and the local government has incurred zero additional costs.

The above shows that Ohio's legislature is out of sync with the population. The low direct costs of implementing inclusive regulations in our state and the high indirect costs of allowing a culture of exclusionary policies reinforce the argument that the Equality of Rights Under the Law amendment would be a welcome and beneficial change to Ohio.

Other States with ERAs

The following are several recent examples of states that have passed ERAs. However, a majority of states have some form of an ERA (Brennan Center for Justice, 2022).

- New York: This past November, New York added an ERA to its constitution, which, similar to Equality of Rights Under the Law, protects from discrimination based on ethnicity, national origin, age, disability, and sex, including sexual orientation, gender identity and pregnancy (Panetta, 2024)
- Nevada: In 2022, Nevada passed a state ERA that included protections for LGBTQ residents and residents of Color. In 2024, the state ERA was used to stop limitations on Medicaid funds from covering abortions as a court found that this was discrimination” (Brennan Center for Justice, 2022).
- Delaware: In 2019, Delaware adopted an ERA that offered protections against sex-based discrimination. In 2021, protection from discrimination based on race, color, or national origin (Eichmann, 2021). Like in Nevada, Delaware’s ERA has been used to protect abortion rights after the overturning of *Roe vs. Wade* (Cheng, 2024).
- Oregon: In 2014, Oregon voters approved a state-level ERA (Brennan Center for Justice, 2022).

In many cases, states that have failed to succeed in passing ERA, have done so because they were unable to secure a supermajority or were blocked by courts. This reinforces the need to pass this amendment via a Citizens Ballot initiative, which would supersede current law and reflect a direct vote by Ohio’s voters.

Equality of Rights Under the Law Compared to Other State ERAs

Ohio's ERA would offer the most comprehensive protections of any state, establishing Ohio as a leader in American politics. Equality of Rights Under the Law is worded most closely to the ERAs in Nevada and more recently, New York.

Nevada's ERA states:

Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by this State or any of its political subdivisions on account of race, color, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, disability, ancestry or national origin (Ballotpedia, 2022).

New York's ERA states:

No person shall be denied the equal protection of the laws of this state or any subdivision thereof. No person shall, because of race, color, ethnicity, national origin, age, disability, creed, or religion, or sex, including sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, pregnancy outcomes, and reproductive healthcare and autonomy, be subjected to any discrimination in their civil rights by any other person or by any firm, corporation, or institution, or by the state or any agency or subdivision of the state pursuant to law.

Nothing in this section shall invalidate or prevent the adoption of any law, regulation, program, or practice that is designed to prevent or dismantle discrimination on the basis of a characteristic listed in this section, nor shall any characteristic listed in this section be interpreted to interfere with, limit, or deny the civil rights of any person based upon any other characteristic identified in this section (Price, 2024).

Equality of Rights Under the Law includes similar language, while also including protection from discrimination based on genetic information, familial status, military status, and recovery status. Other protections may still be added prior to certification.

Additionally, a provision similar to the second provision of New York's ERA has been added to prevent interpretation that could take away programs or laws intended to dismantle inequality.

This is particularly important as four states have ERAs that were written with language intended to dismantle policies like Affirmative Action. These include California, Michigan, Nebraska, and Arizona (Hawkinson & LoGerfo-Olsen, 2022).

Adding the provision, Equality of Rights Under the Law clarifies that the language and intent are to protect the rights of historically marginalized populations, not harm programs that advance equity to address histories of discrimination.

Section 4: Why to Pursue a Constitutional Amendment via Citizens Ballot Initiative

Protecting Civil Rights from Changes in Legislative and Judicial Bodies

While the *Equality of Rights Under the Law* amendment would enshrine anti-discrimination protections that are not currently present in State law, it would also serve another vital purpose: elevating existing anti-discrimination protections to a Constitutional level would allow the people of Ohio to place an essential check on their elected officials.

Currently, Ohioans are protected from various forms of discrimination on both the State and Federal levels, primarily via legislation. These anti-discrimination policies provide two critical layers of protection for Ohioans. However, they are also subject to two key processes that can weaken or even repeal them.

The first of these processes is the legislative process. The legislative bodies that enact our current civil rights laws can amend or repeal existing protections if they have the necessary majority. This prospect is especially worrying in light of Ohio's recent history of being gerrymandered into an unrepresentative supermajority that has given rise to regressive and harmful discriminatory bills and policies in Ohio. Having the added protection of a statewide equal rights amendment reinforces the role of Ohioans in the governance of our state.

The second process is the judicial process, in which State and Federal judges can weaken or even overturn this legislation. Both of these processes allow the government to bypass existing civil rights protections, as seen in other states. For example, New Hampshire's legislature recently passed HB396, a bill that repeals aspects of their previous anti-discrimination policy. Specifically, it weakens protections for transgender individuals in the state (King, 2024). Iowa's legislature has considered similar bills as well (Fingerhut, 2024).

However, by enshrining protections in the State Constitution via a Citizens Ballot initiative, the legislature would not be able to remove or change the amendment, and it cannot simply be overturned with new judicial precedent. This method ensures that the amendment, if passed, would not be easily removed by opponents, providing a more stable civil rights framework over time.

Need for Additional Non-discrimination Policy

Current protections from discrimination in Ohio are insufficient to protect all Ohioans from the reality of discriminatory laws. Most of these protections are either focused on employment discrimination or are federal laws.

Ohio's main state-level anti-discrimination policy is the Ohio Civil Rights Act of 1959 (50 State Summary, 2022), which prohibits discrimination in employment and guarantees fair access to public facilities and private businesses. While the Ohio Civil Rights Act includes similar language to *Equality of Rights Under the Law*, it does not stop the Ohio legislature from passing discriminatory laws, as its targets are employers, public spaces, and businesses. Furthermore, the Act is enforced by the Ohio Civil Rights Commission, which has suffered decreased state and federal funding over the past decade, and funding for the Commission is still in the hands of the legislature (Patton, 2019). In contrast, because it is a constitutional amendment, *Equality of Rights Under the Law* would not be subject to politicized attacks on civil rights policy through the budgetary process. It is also written to limit discrimination by government entities, rather than private citizens and employers.

Federal protections for civil rights have been under attack for years, leaving state and local policies to protect citizens from discrimination. For example, Since the Supreme Court gutted the Voting Rights Act in *Shelby County v. Holder* in 2013, 29 states, including Ohio, have passed restrictive voting laws, which are well known to affect communities of color the most (Singh, 2023). However, the rollback of federal civil rights protections has increased at an alarming rate in the past years. Recent notable examples include the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in *Dobbs v. Jackson*, which overturned federal abortion protections and left states with the ability to restrict abortions, which

has led to catastrophic outcomes for many Americans (Human Rights Watch, 2023). Likewise, last year the Supreme Court ended Affirmative Action, overturning long-held equal protection law (Totenberg, 2023) and shifting the decision to address systematic inequalities that impact students before they even reach the college admission process on individual schools (Hinger, 2023). Other protections, such as the Civil Rights Act of 1866, are being weakened in ways that diminish the ability to stop racial discrimination with direction given to lower courts, even without being ruled on by the Supreme Court (Augustin et al., 2020).

The U.S. Supreme Court is continuing to hear cases that could further strip all Americans of protection from discrimination, particularly in states that do not have state-level protections. Clarence Thomas stated after the *Dobbs v. Jackson* decision that he hopes to revisit gay marriage as well, and could apply the same rationale in appealing *Dobbs* to protections for same-sex consensual sex, contraception, and gay marriage (Obergefell, 2022). In the wake of such aggressive attacks on precedents for civil rights, it is no longer sufficient to rely on federal protections from discrimination. State-level protections are required in order to protect Ohioans, and this Equality of Rights Under the Law would establish a framework for such protections.

Although local non-discrimination ordinances have provided protections for many in the state (Movement Advancement Project), the power of these to stand against discriminatory state laws is now in question as well. The state has repeatedly attacked local governments' efforts to regulate guns, to regulate fracking, to regulate tobacco products marketed to teens, to implement participatory budgeting, etc., even in the face of Home Rule (Editorial Board, 2023). Over the years, wins by the state over local government have significantly weakened Home Rule (Kasler, 2019). Given this record and the aggressiveness with which the state is passing discriminatory laws aimed at transgender Ohioans, it is very possible that local non-discrimination ordinances may not be able to hold up to challenges by the state.

Ohio's Citizen-Led Ballot Initiatives

Ohio has a strong tradition of successful citizen-led ballot initiatives that have resulted in significant policy changes, notably when the legislature still needs to act in the public interest. Recent examples illustrate the strength and effectiveness of this democratic tool:

- Marijuana Legalization and Abortion Rights Initiatives (2023): In 2023, Ohio voters successfully passed initiatives to legalize recreational marijuana and protect abortion rights. These victories highlight the power of citizen initiatives to effectuate change on issues where the legislature has been either unwilling or unable to act. The success of these initiatives demonstrates that Ohioans are willing to mobilize and vote in favor of progressive reforms, mainly when their rights are at stake (Ballotpedia, 2023).
- Anti-Gerrymandering Initiatives (2015 and 2018): The anti-gerrymandering initiatives of 2015 and 2018 are prime examples of how Ohioans have used the ballot initiative process to address issues of fairness and representation. These initiatives, which established more transparent and equitable processes for drawing legislative districts, were passed by overwhelming majorities, reflecting broad bipartisan support.

Despite the apparent success and public support for citizen-led initiatives, Ohio's legislature has increasingly sought to limit their effectiveness. In 2024, House Bill 1 (HB 1) was introduced, which aims to restrict campaign contributions for ballot initiatives, potentially stifling the ability of grassroots movements to raise the funds necessary to compete with well-financed opposition (Ohio Legislature, 2024). Additionally, in 2023, the legislature attempted to raise the threshold for passing citizen-led ballot initiatives from a simple majority to 60%, a move widely seen as an effort to make it more difficult for popular initiatives to succeed (Stewart, 2023). These actions reflect a broader trend of legislative hostility toward citizen-led reforms, further highlighting the need for Ohioans to use the ballot initiative process to protect their rights and ensure that their voices are heard.

Given the legislature's attempts to curtail the effectiveness of citizen-led ballot initiatives and the recent judicial actions that threaten the rights of

marginalized communities, the citizen ballot initiative route remains a necessary and viable option for enshrining non-discrimination protections in Ohio. The successful passage of recent initiatives demonstrates the power of this democratic tool in achieving meaningful and lasting change. Ohioans have repeatedly shown that when the legislature fails to act, they are willing to step up and use their constitutional right to direct democracy to protect their rights and values.

Support for Protection Against Discrimination

Support Among Ohioans

Recent surveys indicate strong support among Ohioans for the protections this initiative seeks to establish. According to the Public Religion Research Institute 2023 survey, 76% of Ohioans support nondiscrimination protections for LGBTQ+ individuals, and 69% support same-sex marriage (Staff, 2024). These figures are consistent with trends observed across the Midwest, where support for nondiscrimination policies stands at 75%, and support for same-sex marriage is at 68% (Consulting, 2023). This data underscores the firm foundation of public approval necessary for the initiative's success. This is similar to data on the Midwest from Gallup, showing 73% approval for same-sex marriage (McCarthy, 2024).

Moreover, preliminary data from the Ohio Family-Building Survey (Regula et al., 2024) provides evidence of robust support for these issues within the state. Current data from the OFBS shows that 76% of respondents strongly support the proposed protections, with an additional 12% expressing general support. These figures suggest that most Ohioans favor the initiative, with only a tiny minority expressing neutrality or opposition.

The *Equality of Rights Under the Law* citizen-led ballot initiative in Ohio is feasible and would likely be strongly supported by the majority of Ohioans. The data shows a clear mandate for expanding protections for marginalized identities and repealing outdated and discriminatory provisions in the state constitution. With strong public support and precedents from other states, this initiative stands a strong chance of success, paving the way for a more inclusive

and equitable Ohio. However, this is currently only possible with a vote by Ohioans, given the legislature's current moves to actively pass discriminatory legislation. The best way to secure protections is to put this decision directly in the hands of Ohioans with a direct vote. Currently, the data shows that if we do, Ohioans are likely to support non-discrimination protections.

Nevada: A Test Case for Ohio

The success of similar initiatives in other states further bolsters the case for the feasibility of this ballot initiative in Ohio. In 2020, Nevada voters passed Question 2, the Marriage Regardless of Gender Amendment, with 62.43% of the vote, effectively repealing their state's constitutional ban on same-sex marriage and replacing it with inclusive language. Nevada also passed Question 1, the Equality of Rights Amendment, in 2022, with 58.63% of the vote, adding explicit protections for gender identity and sexual orientation. Both initiatives enjoyed strong polling support before the vote, with PRRI data indicating 71% and 83% approval, respectively, demonstrating that similar measures can succeed in states with comparable political and social landscapes (Ballotpedia, 2020; Ballotpedia, 2022).

Nevada makes an excellent test case for the *Equality of Rights Under the Law*, as it shares several critical similarities with Ohio. Nevada is the only state that previously had a constitutional ban on gay marriage that was repealed and replaced since Obergefell in 2015. It is also the only state to add explicit protections for gender identity and sexual orientation to its equal rights amendment. The PRRI 2023 study on the legality of abortion showed 65% in favor of abortion in all/some cases. Both gay marriage and anti-discrimination policies poll higher than that. The "midwest" also holds similarly, with 75% in favor of nondiscrimination policies and 68% in favor of gay marriage. In Nevada, approving an equal rights amendment polled 83% in 2022 (Staff, 2023).

Nevada also provides a powerful example of how unions, non-profits, advocacy groups, and education organizations can help use the amendment, once passed, to its fullest effect of ensuring citizen empowerment and representation in governance. As an example, the Nevada ACLU was able to use their equal rights amendment to help block a ban on the use of Medicaid funds to cover abortion

in their state (Nevada, 2024). Nevada is especially relevant to Ohio, where we have passed a reproductive rights amendment, and legislators are still working to prevent access to abortion care (Becker, 2023). Adding the *Equality of Rights Under the Law* amendment would bolster Ohio's few existing rights protections.

Labor Unions and Equal Rights Policies

Labor unions, especially the AFL-CIO, have strongly advocated for equal rights amendments and non-discrimination policies in the second half of the twentieth- and the twenty-first century, recognizing that protecting all workers, regardless of gender, race, or sexual orientation, is fundamental to ensuring fair and just workplaces (Feinstein & Schickler, 2008). Unions like the AFL-CIO have consistently supported legislative efforts to promote equality, including the Equal Rights Amendment and anti-discrimination laws, such as the Legislative Alert letters they have drafted (Samuel, 2023). Their advocacy extends to supporting workplace protections that address issues such as pay equity, harassment, and discrimination, reflecting the belief that all workers deserve dignity and respect.

In Ohio, where approximately 13% of the workforce is unionized, labor unions play a significant role in advocating for these rights (Bureau, 2022). This level of unionization is comparable to neighboring states like Pennsylvania and Michigan, where union membership is similarly strong (Bureau, 2022). These states share a regional commitment to labor rights, underscoring the importance of unions in advancing workplace protections. Ohio's unions have also been instrumental in passing citizen-initiated ballot initiatives, which are crucial in shaping state policy in the twenty-first century. A notable example is the successful campaign to repeal Senate Bill 5 in 2011, which sought to curtail collective bargaining rights for public employees. This victory, driven by union-led efforts, highlighted the significant influence of labor unions in Ohio's political landscape (McNay, 2015).

Through their advocacy for equal rights and non-discrimination policies, Ohio's labor unions continue to play a critical role in advancing a more equitable state. Their involvement in citizen-led initiatives and legislative advocacy underscores their importance in the workplace and broader societal reforms, such as the

passage of the reproductive rights amendment in 2023 and anti-gerrymandering initiatives in 2015, 2018, and 2024. Notably, unions played an important role in passing Nevada's ERA. These broad collaborations that include unions, non-profits, advocacy, and education organizations are necessary to pass and utilize citizen-led ballot initiatives most effectively.

Conclusion

The state of Ohio faces a fraught landscape of discriminatory laws, but Equality of Rights Under the law provides a strong framework to be able to address such discrimination and structural violence against Ohioans. In this time of political uncertainty and rapid loss of civil rights protections, it is more important than ever that we enact strong anti-discrimination policies in our State Constitution that cannot be overturned at the whim of lawmakers. Every Ohioan should feel safe from harassment by our own lawmakers. Every Ohio should feel that they belong in the state and can live here without compromising access to basic services.

Currently, we spend immense amounts of time, money, and despair fighting individual laws from start to finish-trying to pressure lawmakers not to terrorize our own communities. This amendment is a way for Ohioans and civil rights organizations to take back power and have a better framework to fight for our rights. It is about diverse Ohioans asserting our own rights in the state and telling our government bodies that we will not allow for the harassment and exclusion of our neighbors. It is time to enact our own Equal Rights Amendment, Equality of Rights Under the Law, leading both Ohio and the nation to a safer, more equitable future.

References

- 50-state summary of ANTI-DISCRIMINATION Laws. <https://stopaapihate.org>. (2022, October).
<https://stopaapihate.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Stop-AAPI-Hate-50-state-summary-of-anti-discrimination-laws.pdf>
- ACLU of Ohio. (2022, March 17). *Defending our right to learn*.
<https://www.acluohio.org/en/news/defending-our-right-learn>
- Ajilore, O., & Willingham, C. (2019). *Redefining Rural America*. Center for American Progress.
<https://www.americanprogress.org/article/redefining-rural-america/>
- American Immigration Council. (2024). *New Americans in Ohio*.
<https://map.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/locations/ohio/>
- Augustin, S., Banks, M., Inouye, S., & Johnson, K. (2020, March 23). *U.S. Supreme Court Rolls Back Historic Civil Rights Protections In Comcast Ruling*. The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights.
<https://civilrights.org/2020/03/23/u-s-supreme-court-rolls-back-historic-civil-rights-protections-in-comcast-ruling/>
- Ballotpedia. (2016, June). Ohio issue 1, Redistricting Commission Amendment (2015). Ohio Issue 1, Redistricting Commission Amendment (2015).
[https://ballotpedia.org/Ohio_Issue_1,_Redistricting_Commission_Amendment_\(2015\)](https://ballotpedia.org/Ohio_Issue_1,_Redistricting_Commission_Amendment_(2015))
- Ballotpedia. (2018, July). Ohio issue 1, Congressional Redistricting Procedures Amendment (May 2018). Ohio Issue 1, Congressional Redistricting Procedures Amendment (May 2018).
[https://ballotpedia.org/Ohio_Issue_1,_Congressional_Redistricting_Procedures_Amendment_\(May_2018\)](https://ballotpedia.org/Ohio_Issue_1,_Congressional_Redistricting_Procedures_Amendment_(May_2018))
- Ballotpedia. (2020). Nevada Question 2, marriage regardless of Gender Amendment (2020).
[https://ballotpedia.org/Nevada_Question_2,_Marriage_Regardless_of_Gender_Amendment_\(2020\)](https://ballotpedia.org/Nevada_Question_2,_Marriage_Regardless_of_Gender_Amendment_(2020))
- Ballotpedia. (2022). Nevada Question 1, equality of rights amendment (2022). Nevada Question 1, Equality of Rights Amendment.
[https://ballotpedia.org/Nevada_Question_1,_Equality_of_Rights_Amendment_\(2022\)](https://ballotpedia.org/Nevada_Question_1,_Equality_of_Rights_Amendment_(2022))
- Ballotpedia (2023, December). Ohio issue 2, marijuana legalization initiative (2023). Ballotpedia.

- [https://ballotpedia.org/Ohio_Issue_2,_Marijuana_Legalization_Initiative_\(2023\)](https://ballotpedia.org/Ohio_Issue_2,_Marijuana_Legalization_Initiative_(2023))
- Becker, A. (2023, December 7). Ohio's abortion protections take effect, but the fight over access continues. *The 19th*.
<https://19thnews.org/2023/12/ohios-abortion-protections-take-effect-issu-e-1-fight-access/>
- Brennan Center for Justice. (2022). *State-Level Equal Rights Amendments | Brennan Center for Justice*. Brennan Center for Justice.
<https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/research-reports/state-level-equal-rights-amendments>
- Bureau, U. S. C. (2022). Ohio State Statistics. Explore census data.
<https://data.census.gov/profile/Ohio?g=040XX00US39>
- CDC. (2024, June 26). *Disability & Health U.S. State Profile Data: Ohio*. Disability & Health U.S. State Profile Data for Ohio (Adults 18+ years of age).
<https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/disabilityandhealth/impacts/ohio.html>
- Cheng, T. T. (2024, February 29). *State Equal Rights Amendments Can Protect Reproductive Rights Post-Dobbs | State Court Report*.
<https://statecourtreport.org/our-work/analysis-opinion/state-equal-rights-amendments-can-protect-reproductive-rights-post-dobbs>
- Clark, L. B. (2022). The Critical Racialization of Parents' Rights. *Yale LJ*, 132, 2139.
- Columbus Dispatch Editorial Board. (2024). Our view: Ohio has never shrunk before. We need a plan to stop dire population trend. *The Columbus Dispatch*.
<https://www.dispatch.com/story/opinion/editorials/2024/11/11/ohio-shrinking-population-solutions-needed/75839793007/>
- Consulting, Epicenter. (2023). American values atlas. PRRI.
<https://ava.prrri.org/#lgbt/2023/States/lgbtdis/m/US-OH>
- Editorial Board. (2023, December 29). *Home rule rights are the people's rights. Lawmakers need to start honoring that: Editorial*. Cleveland.
<https://www.cleveland.com/opinion/2023/12/home-rule-rights-are-the-peoples-rights-lawmakers-need-to-start-honoring-that-editorial.html>
- Eichmann, M. (2021). Delaware amends Constitution to protect on basis of race, color, and national origin. *WHYY*.
<https://whyy.org/articles/delaware-adds-protections-based-on-race-color-and-national-origin-to-constitution/>
- Eliason, L. (2024, July 18). Thank You and Request for Data on Non-Discrimination Ordinance Impact.

- Everett, B. G., Onge, J. S., & Mollborn, S. (2016). Effects of Minority Status and Perceived Discrimination on Mental Health. *Population research and policy review*, 35(4), 445–469. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11113-016-9391-3>
- Feinstein, B. D., & Schickler, E. (2008). Platforms and Partners: The Civil Rights Realignment Reconsidered. *Studies in American Political Development*, 22(1), 1–31. doi:10.1017/S0898588X08000011
- Fingerhut, H. (2024, January 31). *Move to strip gender identity from Iowa's civil rights law rejected by legislators*. PBS News. <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/politics/move-to-strip-gender-identity-from-iowas-civil-rights-law-rejected-by-legislators>
- Fischel, M. (2024, July 15). Thank You and Request for Data on Non-Discrimination Ordinance Impact.
- Fleszar, L. G., Bryant, A. S., Johnson, C. O., Blacker, B. F., Aravkin, A., Baumann, M., ... & Roth, G. A. (2023). Trends in state-level maternal mortality by racial and ethnic group in the United States. *Jama*, 330(1), 52-61.
- Flores, A. R., & Conron, K. J. (2023). Adult LGBT population in the United States.
- Fourquarean, J. R. (2024, July 29). Thank You and Request for Data on Non-Discrimination Ordinance Impact.
- FWD.us. (2023, August 22). *Immigration can reverse rural population decline*. FWD.US. <https://www.fwd.us/news/rural-decline/>
- Gao, H., & Zhang, W. (2017). Employment nondiscrimination acts and corporate innovation. *Management Science*, 63(9), 2982-2999.
- Goldberg, A. E., & Smith, J. Z. (2024). LGBTQ parents' accounts of their children's experiences with heterosexism in schools. *Psychology of Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity*.
- GLAAD. (2023, May 24). States passing anti-transgender laws face corporate pushback and Economic Impact. Press Releases. <https://glaad.org/releases/states-passing-anti-transgender-laws-face-corporate-pushback-and-economic-impact>
- Hawkinson, K., & LoGerfo-Olsen, S. (2022, August 25). The State of State Equal Rights Amendments: A National Roundup. *Ms. Magazine*. <https://msmagazine.com/2022/08/25/state-equal-rights-amendments-era-tracker/>
- Hinger, S. (2023, July 12). *Moving Beyond the Supreme Court's Affirmative Action Rulings* | ACLU. American Civil Liberties Union. <https://www.aclu.org/news/racial-justice/moving-beyond-the-supreme-courts-affirmative-action-rulings>

- Human Rights Campaign. (2023, June 22). The Equality Act. Resources.
<https://www.hrc.org/resources/equality>
- Human Rights Watch. (2023). *Human Rights Crisis: Abortion in the United States After Dobbs* | Human Rights Watch.
<https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/04/18/human-rights-crisis-abortion-unit-ed-states-after-dobbs>
- Karakus, M., Courtney, M., & Aydin, H. (2023). Understanding the academic achievement of the first-and second-generation immigrant students: a multi-level analysis of PISA 2018 data. *Educational Assessment, Evaluation and Accountability*, 35(2), 233-278.
- Kasler, K. (2019, October 21). *Home Rule In Ohio—Under Attack Or Reined In?* The Statehouse News Bureau.
<https://www.statenews.org/government-politics/2019-10-21/home-rule-in-ohio-under-attack-or-reined-in>
- Khubba, S., Heim, K., & Hong, J. (2022). National census coverage estimates for people in the United States by demographic characteristics.
- King, I. (2024, May 22). *NH Senate Sends 1 More Anti-LGBTQ+ Bill to Governor Sununu's Desk, With 4 Total Now*. GLAD Law.
<https://www.glad.org/nh-senate-sends-1-more-anti-lgbtq-bill-to-governor-sununu-desk-with-4-total-now/>
- Krnjacki, L., Priest, N., Aitken, Z., Emerson, E., Llewellyn, G., King, T., & Kavanagh, A. (2018). Disability-based discrimination and health: findings from an Australian-based population study. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health*, 42(2), 172-174.
- Lindsey, T. (2024, July 15). Thank You and Request for Data on Non-Discrimination Ordinance Impact.
- Livingston, N. A., Berke, D. S., Ruben, M. A., Matza, A. R., & Shipherd, J. C. (2019). Experiences of trauma, discrimination, microaggressions, and minority stress among trauma-exposed LGBT veterans: Unexpected findings and unresolved service gaps. *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy*, 11(7), 695.
- Mallory, C., Brown, T. N. T., & Sears, B. (2019, October). The Impact of Stigma and Discrimination Against LGBT People in Ohio. The Williams Institute.
<https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/Impact-LGBT-Discrimination-OH-Nov-2019.pdf>.
- Mallory, C., & Sears, B. (2016, May). The legal and economic implications of North Carolina's HB2. The Williams Institute.

- <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/Legal-Economic-Implications-HB2-May-2016.pdf>
- March of Dimes. (2024). *Percentage of births by maternal age: Ohio, 2020-2022 average*. March of Dimes | PeriStats.
<https://www.marchofdimes.org/peristats/data?reg=39&top=2&stop=5&lev=1&slev=4&obj=3&sreg=39>
- Maynard, B. R., Vaughn, M. G., Salas-Wright, C. P., & Vaughn, S. (2016). Bullying victimization among school-aged immigrant youth in the United States. *Journal of Adolescent Health, 58*(3), 337-344.
- Mayo Clinic. (2023, September 8). *Miscarriage*.
<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/pregnancy-loss-miscarriage/symptoms-causes/syc-20354298#:~:text=About%2010%25%20to%2020%25%20of,the%20carrying%20of%20the%20pregnancy.>
- McCarthy, J. (2024, February 7). U.S. same-sex marriage support holds at 71% high. Gallup.com.
<https://news.gallup.com/poll/506636/sex-marriage-support-holds-high.aspx>
- McNay, J. (2015, September 9). The Ohio AAUP and the Repeal of Senate Bill 5. AAUP. <https://www.aaup.org/article/ohio-aaup-and-repeal-senate-bill-5>
- Migdon, B. (2024, February 7). Half of trans people in US have considered moving out of state because of anti-LGBTQ laws: Survey. The Hill.
<https://thehill.com/policy/healthcare/4452248-half-of-trans-people-in-us-have-considered-moving-out-of-state-because-of-anti-lgbtq-laws-survey>
- Moore, T. (2024, July 30). Thank You and Request for Data on Non-Discrimination Ordinance Impact.
- Movement Advancement Project. (2024). Movement Advancement Project: State Profiles. Ohio State Profile.
https://www.lgbtmap.org/equality-maps/profile_state/OH
- Nevada, A. (2024, March 19). Nevada court will block state ban on Medicaid coverage for abortion.
American Civil Liberties Union.
<https://www.aclu.org/press-releases/nevada-court-will-block-state-ban-on-medicaid-coverage-for-abortion>
- Nilni, Y. I., Horenstein, A., McClendon, J., Duke, C. C., Sawdy, M., & Galovski, T. E. (2023). The impact of perceived everyday discrimination and income on racial and ethnic disparities in PTSD, depression, and anxiety among veterans. *Plos one, 18*(9), e0291965.

- Obergefell, J. (2022, June 27). *LGBTQ advocate Jim Obergefell fears other rights are at risk with Roe overturned* [Interview].
<https://www.npr.org/2022/06/27/1107961494/lgbtq-advocate-jim-obergefell-fears-other-rights-are-at-risk-with-roe-overturned>
- Ohio Department of Health. (2023). (rep.). *Induced Abortions in Ohio, 2022 Report*. Ohio Department of Health. Retrieved 2024, from
https://odh.ohio.gov/wps/wcm/connect/gov/ae63c3e4-8564-4f39-b76c-045390612a47/VS-AbortionReport2022.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CONVERT_TO=url&CACHEID=ROOTWORKSPACE.Z18_79GCH8013HMOA06A2E16IV2082-ae63c3e4-8564-4f39-b76c-045390612a47-oHM8dKA.
- Ohio Legislature. (2024). House Bill 1 | 135th general assembly. To enact section 3517.121 of the Revised Code should be enacted to modify the Campaign Finance Law regarding foreign nationals and ballot issues.
https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/files/special-session/hb1_04_EN.pdf
- Ohio, S. of. (2023). State of Ohio Population Projections Report 2023. Department of Development.
<https://dam.assets.ohio.gov/image/upload/development.ohio.gov/research/pop1/State-of-Ohio-Population-Projections-Report-2023.pdf>
- Panetta, S. L., Grace. (2024, November 3). *New York passes equal rights amendment with abortion protections*. The 19th.
<https://19thnews.org/2024/11/new-york-equal-rights-amendment-abortion-results/>
- Patton, W. (2019, February 14). Ohio Civil Rights Commission: Fighting Discrimination with diminished state support. Policy Matters Ohio.
<https://www.policymattersohio.org/research-policy/quality-ohio/revenue-budget/budget-policy/ohio-civil-rights-commission-fighting-discrimination-with-diminished-state-support>
- Pew Research Center. (2024, May 12). *Religious Landscape Study*. Pew Research Center's Religion & Public Life Project.
<https://www.pewresearch.org/religious-landscape-study/database/state/ohio/>
- Pichler, S., Blazovich, J. L., Cook, K. A., Huston, J. M., & Strawser, W. R. (2018). Do LGBT-supportive corporate policies enhance firm performance?. *Human Resource Management*, 57(1), 263-278.
- Price, K. (2024, March 18). *What the Equal Rights Amendment Will Mean in New York*. New York State Bar Association.

- <https://nysba.org/why-new-york-needs-an-equal-rights-amendment-now-more-than-ever/>
- Prichep, D. (2024, May 6). Transgender bathroom bills are back, gaining traction after past boycotts. *Politics*.
<https://www.npr.org/2024/05/06/1249406353/transgender-bathroom-bill-republican-states#:~:text=In%202016%2C%20North%20Carolina%20passed,Pat%20McCrory>
- Project on Government Oversight. (2023). *Dollars and Demographics: How Census Data Shapes Federal Funding....* POGO.
<https://www.pogo.org/reports/dollars-and-demographics-how-census-data-shapes-federal-funding-distribution>
- Regula, L., Merema, D., North, K., Housson, C., & Loesh, J. (2024, August 12). Preliminary Dataset: Ohio Family-building Survey. Dayton, Ohio; University of Dayton.
- Samuel, W. (2023, April 27). Letter supporting legislation that would advance the Equal Rights Amendment: AFL-CIO. Legislative Alert.
<https://aflcio.org/about/advocacy/legislative-alerts/letter-supporting-legislation-would-advance-equal-rights>
- SIF, U. (2020). Report on US sustainable and impact investing trends. US Sustainable Investing Foundation. Calvert Research and Management.
- Singh, J., & Carter, S. (2023, June 23). *States have added nearly 100 restrictive laws since Scotus gutted the Voting Rights Act 10 Years Ago*. Brennan Center for Justice.
<https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/analysis-opinion/states-have-added-nearly-100-restrictive-laws-scotus-gutted-voting-rights>
- Staff, P. (2024, March 12). Views on LGBTQ rights in all 50 states: Findings from Prri's 2023 American values atlas. Views on LGBTQ Rights in All 50 States: Findings from PRRI's 2023 American Values Atlas.
<https://www.prri.org/research/views-on-lgbtq-rights-in-all-50-states/>
- Starr, S. (2024, November 17). *Haitian immigrants flee Springfield, Ohio, in droves after Trump election win*. *The Guardian*.
<https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2024/nov/17/haitian-immigrants-springfield-ohio-trump-election>
- Stewart, B. (2023). House joint resolution 1. House Joint Resolution 1 | 135th General Assembly | Ohio Legislature.
<https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/135/hjr1>

- Swallow, J. (2024, July 16). Thank You and Request for Data on Non-Discrimination Ordinance Impact.
- Thompson, E. (2021, May 12). *School resource officers exacerbate the school-to-prison pipeline for students of color*. ACLU of Ohio. <https://www.acluohio.org/en/news/school-resource-officers-exacerbate-school-prison-pipeline-students-color>
- Totenberg, N. (2023, June 29). *Supreme Court guts affirmative action, effectively ending race-conscious admissions*. NPR. <https://www.npr.org/2023/06/29/1181138066/affirmative-action-supreme-court-decision>
- Trau, M. (2024, January 26). More than 100 families with trans members trying to leave Ohio amid new gender-affirming care ban •Ohio Capital Journal. Ohio Capital Journal. <https://ohiocapitaljournal.com/2024/01/26/more-than-100-families-with-trans-members-trying-to-leave-ohio-amid-new-gender-affirming-care-ban/>
- Turban, J. L., King, D., Kobe, J., Reisner, S. L., & Keuroghlian, A. S. (2022). Access to gender-affirming hormones during adolescence and mental health outcomes among transgender adults. *PLoS one*, 17(1), e0261039.
- Tyler, E. T. (2022). Black mothers matter: The social, political and legal determinants of black maternal health across the lifespan. *J. Health Care L. & Pol'y*, 25, 49.
- White, J., Sepúlveda, M. J., Patterson, C. J., National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, & Committee on Population. (2020). Demography and Public Attitudes of Sexual and Gender Diverse Populations. *Understanding the Well-Being of LGBTQI+ Populations*.
- White Light Behavioral Health. (2024, July 18). *Ohio Addiction Research 2024: Abuse facts, overdose rates, and rehabilitation statistics*. Ohio Addiction Research 2024: Abuse Facts, Overdose Rates, and Rehabilitation Statistics. <https://whitelightbh.com/resources/ohio-addiction-statistics/#:~:text=Nearly%206%25%20of%20people%20aged,to%20drug%20abuse%20in%202023.>
- Williams, D. R., Lawrence, J. A., Davis, B. A., & Vu, C. (2019). Understanding how discrimination can affect health. *Health services research*, 54, 1374-1388.