

'Nothing about us without us!' The trans community fights back

*featuring Ash Orr,
National Center for Transgender Equality*



This time on Code WACK!

Some states are making it easier for trans and non-binary individuals to get gender-affirming care but in other states, a record number of laws have been passed to outlaw – or limit – such care. ***What kind of toll does this take on people in the trans community, their doctors and their advocates? What policy solutions are needed to ensure that everyone, regardless of gender identity, has access to the medical care they need?***

To find out, we spoke to **Ash Orr**, a trans organizer from West Virginia and press relations manager for the [National Center for Transgender Equality](#) or **NCTE**. *This is the second episode in a two-part series.*

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WE DISCUSS

Some states are making it easier for people to get gender-affirming care. Let's start with California's Senate Bill 923, the TGI [transgender, gender diverse and/or intersex] Inclusive Care Act. What should we know about it?

"... this [bill] really adds a whole new level of ... safety and transparency and education for trans individuals that are receiving gender-affirming care. And this is important because it ensures that providers are actually and meaningfully educated on these issues, educated on care and cultural competence, which is necessary for them to be a provider that trans people can trust, that they can get to safe and knowledgeable and respectful care for them, which means that they will get care.

"And that is monumental for our community ... It provides a requirement for tracking and monitoring complaints, which is critical to holding providers accountable to standards and creating growth and improvement.

"... So this is truly a wonderful, wonderful law, I'm so thankful for it. Because again, it adds in that level of transparency, it adds security for the trans community. It makes sure that those in California who are getting gender affirming care are able to go to a doctor who is knowledgeable in that care, that is safe and trusted." – **Ash Orr**

Let's talk about the situation in other states. According to the Human Rights Campaign, over 35% of transgender youth live in states that have passed bans on gender-affirming care.

" ... we saw in 2023 alone, over 500 bills introduced that targeted LGBTQ-plus rights, and over 400 of these bills targeted the rights of the trans community, and close to 150 of these bills specifically aimed to restrict or outright access or ban access to life saving and gender-affirming care for youth, which in some cases was as old as 25.

"We now have 21 states that have passed bans on gender-affirming care and these bans include substantial financial professional penalties for the providers that do provide this necessary care to patients and some even codified allowing your child to receive this care as being a form of child abuse.

"... The banning of this care is consistent with attempts to restrict reproductive care access and to live in our bodily autonomy, and it is directly impacting the mental and emotional wellbeing of trans youth, of their guardians and their parents, of the trans community as a whole. It's impacting our allies. It's impacting medical care providers.." - **Ash Orr**

Do you know of providers who have been threatened?

"Here in West Virginia, we have had health care providers being threatened and I'm not talking about having to like people trying to get them fired, I am talking about direct threats on their lives and on their children's lives and on their spouses lives. There have been deliberate attempts at getting these individuals fired. There have been deliberate attempts at getting gender-affirming healthcare clinics shut down here.

"We are also seeing ... activists and organizers who are openly trans and who are on the ground, working alongside these healthcare providers and working alongside other organizations here in the state, we're getting threats. We get, I will be honest, I get at least one threat a week. It's something that I have just learned to accept." - **Ash Orr**

Helpful Links

[National Center for Transgender Equality](#)

[TGI Inclusive Care Act \(SB 923\)](#), *California LGBTQ Health & Human Services Network*

[Map: Attacks on Gender Affirming Care by State](#), *Human Rights Campaign*

[Paying an Unfair Price: The Financial Penalty For Being Transgender in America](#), *Movement Advancement Project*

[LGBTQ+ advocacy group records 2023 as 'most damaging and destructive' year](#), *The Guardian*

Episode Transcript

Read the [episode transcript](#).

Guest Biography - Ash Orr

Ash Orr (he/they) is a trans organizer from the beautiful state of West Virginia.

They currently serve as the Press Relations Manager for the National Center for Transgender Equality as well as a National Storyteller for Planned Parenthood, leveraging their personal experiences with abortion care and transition-related healthcare to help dispel the societal stigmas surrounding these topics.

In their spare time, Ash enjoys hiking, traveling, researching quantum physics and black holes, collecting rocks, chasing tornadoes, and playing board games with their spouse.

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