

# US: Trump administration doubles down on trans discrimination

*US Congress should pass the Equality Act.*

By Ryan Thoreson

HRW (25.06.2020) – <https://bit.ly/2ZngsPB> – The Trump administration is moving ahead with a rule that would write transgender people out of sex discrimination protections in health care. While advocates fight the rule in court, transgender people will continue to face discriminatory treatment and refusals of care.

This comes despite a United States Supreme Court ruling last week that affirmed employment protections for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people, reasoning that gender identity discrimination is a form of sex discrimination prohibited by law.

Human Rights Watch has documented the daunting barriers that transgender people face finding healthcare services. Transgender people often are unable to find care, encounter discrimination or refusals in healthcare settings, or simply avoid seeking care because of concerns they will be mistreated.

When the administration first proposed the new rule in 2019, Human Rights Watch joined thousands of other organizations and individuals in raising its serious concerns with the US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Although it received more than 20,000 comments opposing the rule, HHS adopted the regulation, leaving transgender people even more vulnerable to the routine discrimination they already face in healthcare settings.

The rollback of healthcare protections is the latest in a long string of Trump administration attacks on transgender people.

Since 2017, the administration has withdrawn regulatory protections for transgender children in schools, fought recognition of transgender people under federal employment laws, banned transgender people from serving in the military, rolled back protections for transgender people in prisons, and threatened to cut off funding to schools that let transgender girls participate in sports.

The administration's cruel assault on transgender rights shows no signs of letting up. Just after the healthcare regulation was finalized, the US Department of Housing and Urban Development said it would propose a rule permitting single-sex homeless shelters to turn away transgender people.

The Supreme Court's recent decision pulls the rug from under these anti-transgender regulations by making clear that sex, as prohibited grounds for discrimination, includes gender identity. Instead of waiting for the courts to strike them down, the US Senate should pass the Equality Act, which would

expressly protect transgender people from discrimination in employment, housing, federally funded programs, and other domains. As the past week shows, unless lawmakers take action, the administration will continue its campaign to deprive transgender people of their fundamental rights.