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The Essential Role of Associations in Supporting LGBTQIA+ Rights and Celebrations

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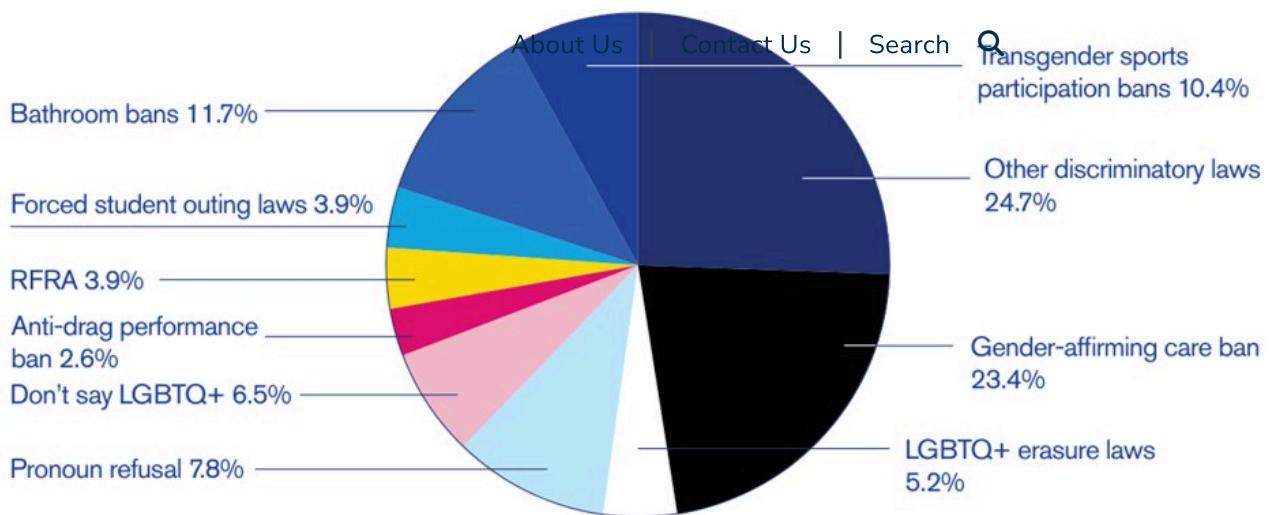
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June is Pride Month – a time to celebrate the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual plus (LGBTQIA+) community and its history, culture, and rights. Pride Month serves as a significant opportunity to reflect on your organization's inclusivity practices, ensuring that your LGBTQIA+ members feel seen, respected, and supported.

The generational shifts in societal acceptance towards the LGBTQIA+ community are evident. However, substantive political and legal hurdles persist. **A review of recent legislation impacting the LGBTQIA+ community** reveals a concerning trend. In the previous year alone, 75 anti-LGBTQIA+ bills were passed, and the **American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU)** is tracking **515 similar future bills**.



Source: [Human Rights Campaign](#)

Educating members on LGBTQIA+ rights

The above statistics underscore the need for associations to stand as allies and advocate for their LGBTQIA+ members. Associations can provide their members with resources to positively influence the political landscape. Encouraging active participation in elections and promoting understanding of politicians' views on LGBTQIA+ matters are key. Additionally, members can stay informed about such developments through valuable platforms such as the ACLU or the Human Rights Campaign, which offers a comprehensive look into such legislation with its State Scorecards.

Deciphering misinformation

Public opinion is shaped, in part, by the information disseminated by public figures and groups. Unfortunately, misinformation and negative rhetoric against LGBTQIA+ individuals are widespread. Here, associations can play a role in education and awareness by guiding members to resources like the [GLADD Accountability Project](#).

Pride Month calls for both activism and celebration – of LGBTQIA+ individuals and of the LGBTQIA+ members that create meaningful impacts in your association. Your organization can celebrate Pride Month by encouraging the display of Pride-themed apparels, the flying of the Pride flag, using the Pride frame on social media, and more. Hosting a social event for members to connect within your organization is another impactful option to commemorate Pride Month and build relationships.

Providing additional resources

Engagement with arts and entertainment serves as a powerful means to understand and appreciate the rich tapestry of LGBTQIA+ experiences. Associations can promote this by curating a Netflix or Hulu watchlist of movies, television shows, and documentaries with LGBTQIA+ themes for members to learn more about the history and evolution of Pride Month. Your organization can also create a playlist for members filled with Pride-affirming music and LGBTQIA+ artists. [Click here](#) to listen to Smithbucklin's customized Pride Month playlist.

As advocates, we have a role in creating a safer, more inclusive society for everyone. Associations are uniquely positioned to support LGBTQIA+ members by promoting awareness, encouraging engagement, and fostering an ongoing culture of acceptance and celebration – not only during the month of June, but throughout the entire year.

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