

The Delray Democrat

Republicans Find a Way to “Out” Trans People Through a Back Door¹

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To Governor DeSantis and the Republican members of the Florida Legislature:

In January, you proposed [HB 1639](#) which would “out” trans people by forcing those updating their existing drivers’ licenses or state ID cards to designate their sex at birth, instead of gender. To make it more odious, the bill’s revision required all Florida group healthcare plans that cover gender transition to also cover “conversion therapy,” despite the dire warnings of nearly every major mental health organization. (See accompanying article on chaplains.)

With overwhelming public opposition, the bill failed. No problem; just go through the back door. In [a memo](#) dated January 26, 2024, the Department of Highway and Motor Vehicles rescinded the current policy that allows updating of gender markers. The memo instructed tax collectors to treat gender changes as a violation of existing fake ID laws.

“It was an end-run around public policy,” John-Harris Maurer, Equality Florida’s Public Policy Director, told *The Delray Democrat*. “People updating existing licenses must list their sex as it appears on their birth certificates. Forcing trans people to carry an identification document that doesn’t align with who they are is not only insulting to their dignity but puts them at risk.” Think about dealing with police at a traffic stop.

You continue to trample on the fundamental principle of church-state separation, which has come to be guaranteed by the First and Fourteenth Amendments, to appease the religious zealots who are, ironically, blind to the protection those amendments give to their own faiths.

Consider life in those nations with official religions. Iranian women face execution should a part of their body be accidentally exposed when they’re outside their homes. North Koreans who fail to publicly adore Dear Leader “disappear.” Nazi Germany was a fiercely Christian state while it exterminated six million Jews.

Be careful what your ask for.

¹ [The Delray Democrat](#), May 2024, page 5.