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Columbus Joins with National Criminal Justice Leaders to Urge Texas Court to Stop State from Targeting Transgender Kids and Their Parents

Current and Former Prosecutors, Attorneys General, Law Enforcement Leaders, and Former DOJ Officials and Judges File Amicus Brief Arguing that the Governor's Anti-Trans Directive Threatens Lives and Undermines Public Safety

COLUMBUS, OH—Columbus City Attorney Zach Klein today joined with a bipartisan group of 93 criminal justice leaders from around the nation, including current and former prosecutors, law enforcement leaders, Attorneys General, and former Department of Justice officials and judges, to file an [amicus brief](#) in the 353rd District Court of Texas in *Jane Doe v. Greg Abbott*, supporting efforts to block the State of Texas from prosecuting and criminalizing parents who seek gender-affirming care for their transgender children.

The signatories argue that Texas Governor Greg Abbott's directive to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) to investigate, and potentially prosecute, these parents for child abuse – and to involve medical professionals, others who care for children, and even members of the general public in this mandate – will result in grave harm to already vulnerable young people. As noted in the brief, these divisive and deeply troubling policies erode public trust in the integrity of the justice system, and thereby inhibit the ability of law enforcement to keep communities safe.

“In my time as City Attorney, Columbus has positioned itself as a leader in justice reform focused on building trust and protecting our most vulnerable. The Texas directive stands in stark contrast to these priorities and will erode public trust, undermine public safety, and threaten the lives of transgender youth,” said Columbus City Attorney Zach Klein, one of the signatories on the amicus brief. **“As a parent, you want what's best for your child, to see them grow up to be happy, healthy and true to who they are. It's not the government's job to tell parents how to care for and raise their children. This should concern every parent.”**

The signatories emphasize the devastating impact the Governor's actions will have: “By singling out families with transgender children for government interference and opening the door to intrusions into the privacy of deeply personal medical care, while also triggering potential family separation and even prosecution based on clinically recommended treatment, Governor Abbott, Commissioner Masters, and the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services have profoundly threatened both public trust and the well-being of these children and their loved

ones. Mandates and policies such as these create troubling and destructive barriers between members of vulnerable communities and law enforcement and will only increase the risk of victimization, abuse and violence these individuals face.”

“Instead of promoting policies that can actually make our communities safer and healthier, some state leaders in Texas have decided their priority is to attack the trans community and criminalize life-saving care,” said Miriam Krinsky, Executive Director of Fair and Just Prosecution, the organizer of the brief, and a former federal prosecutor. **“At a time when trust in government is in dire need of fortifying, this unthinkable action will only serve to deepen biases and divides in our community, put loving parents and their children at risk and further marginalize an already vulnerable population. And all of this inevitably will erode faith in the rule of law – an essential ingredient in maintaining public safety.”**

“Why would people call law enforcement to ask for help when they believe that the government is utilizing its resources to prosecute loving parents?” said **Joseph Brann**, former Hayward, Calif. Police Chief, former Director of the DOJ Office of Community Oriented Policing Services and another signatory to the brief. **“Anti-trans laws undermine the integrity of the criminal legal system, which makes the job of law enforcement even harder and compromises public safety.”**

Signatories include Texas District and County Attorneys John Creuzot (Dallas County), Delia Garza (Travis County Attorney), José Garza (Travis County DA), Joe Gonzales (Bexar County), Mark Gonzalez (Nueces County), Christian D. Menefee (Harris County) and Brian Middleton (Fort Bend County); Attorneys General Thomas J. Donovan, Jr. (Vermont), Keith Ellison (Minnesota), Leevin Camacho (Guam), Kathy Jennings (Delaware) and Karl A. Racine (District of Columbia); current law enforcement leaders including Chief Abdul D. Pridgen (San Leandro, Calif.) and Sheriffs Steven Tompkins (Suffolk County, Mass.) and Jerry Clayton (Washtenaw County, Mich.); former Police Chiefs Joseph Brann, Richard Biehl, RaShall Brackney, Brendan Cox, Darrel Stephens and Jim Bueermann; former U.S. Attorneys Barbara McQuade and Joyce Vance; and former judges Nancy Gertner (U.S. District Court, Massachusetts) and William Royal Furgeson, Jr. (U.S. District Court, Western District of Texas), among others.

Read the brief and see a full list of *amici* [here](#).

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