



April 21, 2021

Honorable Laura Kelly, Governor  
Attn: Constituent Services, Rm. 264-W  
300 SW 10<sup>th</sup> Ave.  
Topeka, KS 66612

Dear Governor Kelly,

As faith leaders in Kansas, we join with so many others who want Kansas to be a state that is healthy, diverse, strong and oriented to the future. We want to be a place that attracts the best and the brightest and a place we can all feel proud to call home. That is only possible when our policies and laws indicate that we value the diversity of all of God's children. And so we write to urge you to veto SB 55. While named as protecting girls sports, the bill is focused on banning transgender youth from full participation in sports and has the potential to do real harm to an already vulnerable and marginalized population.

When legislation about the LGBTQI community is discussed, there are often many statements from faith leaders that give the impression that all faith leaders in Kansas are of one mind about LGBTQI issues. And often that impression is that the "faith community" does not support LGBTQI persons. Nothing could be more inaccurate; there are many churches, pastors, and lay members in Kansas that are very supportive of LGBTQI persons and are especially appalled at SB 55 as it targets an especially vulnerable population - transgender children. Transgender children are not political footballs to be used to score points in the religious culture wars.

We believe that God loves each and every child as a unique creation. A child to be loved and supported to become fully who they are. Every child should be protected, valued, respected and have the right to participate in all of society as every other person without fear. This is the state we want; a state that seeks to embody the Biblical text that *God is Love*; and a state where our laws reflect our commitment to the prophetic tradition, calling on people of faith to "Learn to do good; seek justice: help the oppressed, defend the orphan, plead for the widow" (Isaiah 1:17). Justice for Kansans means full support, recognition, and access for transgender children. Don't let hatred be Kansas's reputation in our nation and the world. Veto this bill, and stand with people of faith for love, welcome, and equality.

The undersigned members of the Kansas faith community:

Dr. Edith Guffey, Conference Minister - Kansas Oklahoma Conference, United Church of Christ  
Rev. Rachael Pryor, United Church of Christ, Kansas-Oklahoma Conference  
Board Chair, Kansas Interfaith Action  
Peter Luckey, United Church of Christ pastor



Rev. Dr. Shannah M. McAleer, retired Pastor, Kansas Oklahoma Conference, UCC.

Pastor Christina Manero, Lorraine Avenue Mennonite Church, Wichita, KS

Rev. Don Miller – United Church of Christ

Ptr. Charles McKinzie LLP in United Methodist Church

Rev. Dr. Trudy Kenyon Anderson, Senior Pastor, West Heights United Methodist Church  
Wichita

Rev. Dr. Robin McGonigle, Wichita Kansas

Rev. Thad Holcombe (Honorably Retired - Presbyterian) Lawrence, KS

Kane McEntire, Wichita

Terry Glover, Reconciling Ministries Committee Chair, Wichita West Heights United Methodist  
Church

Rev. Aaron Roberts, Senior Minister, Colonial Church in Prairie Village

Reverend Monte C. Giddings

Rev. Caela Simmons Wood, Pastor, First Congregational United Church of Christ, Manhattan

Rev. Jill Sander-Chali, Senior Pastor, College Hill United Methodist Church, Wichita, KS

Rev. Michael Vollbrecht, Peace United Church of Christ, Alma, Kansas

Rev. Paul Ellis Jackson, associate minister

Rev. Jackie Carter, Table of Hope Metropolitan Community Church

Rev. Ross A. Baker: Lawrence Centenary and Eudora UMCs

Rev. Joanna Harader, Peace Mennonite Church, Lawrence, KS

Rev. Tobias Schlingensiepen, Senior Minister, First Congregational Church 1701 SW Collins  
Ave. Topeka, Kansas, 66604

Rev. Lawrence Fry, United Methodist Minister, Retired, Great Plains Conference of the United  
Methodist Church

Rev. Maddie Johnson, She/her/hers, Pastor at Grace UMC Pastor at Grace UMC

Rabbi Moti Rieber, Kansas Interfaith Action

Judy Roitman (Zen Master Bon Hae), Guiding Teacher, Kansas Zen Center

Rev Jonalu Johnstone, Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Manhattan