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Florida LGBTQ+ Democratic Caucus statement on the ruling striking down Florida’s ban on Medicaid coverage for gender-affirming health care

St. Petersburg, Fla. (June 22, 2023) – The Florida LGBTQ+ Democratic Caucus applauds U.S. District Judge Robert L. Hinkle’s decision striking down the Florida Agency for Health Care Administration policy and Florida law that prohibits Medicaid coverage of gender-affirming care. Florida’s anti-transgender health care rule denied Medicare beneficiaries of any age coverage for gender-affirming care, while sections of SB 254 banned state funding for Medicaid coverage. Judge Hinkle’s ruling is a huge win for the transgender community.

Nathan Bruemmer, President of the LGBTQ+ Democratic Caucus, called the order “a needed victory for Transgender Floridians at a time when we have experienced unprecedented attacks on our rights and our humanity – including attacks coming from elected officials. Judge Hinkle’s statement in the ruling that ‘the statute and rule were an exercise in politics, not good medicine,’ sends a powerful message to Republicans that they cannot legislate hate in Florida.”

We congratulate the plaintiffs, Lambda Legal, Southern Legal Counsel, Florida Health Justice Project, the National Health Law Program, and Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman on their successful challenge in this case, *Dekker v. Weida*. We also congratulate the Southern Legal Counsel, GLBTQ Legal Advocates & Defenders, the National Center for Lesbian Rights and the Human Rights Campaign in *Doe v. Ladapo*, in which Judge Hinkle recently ordered a preliminary injunction halting enforcement of SB 254’s ban on gender-affirming care for minors. We appreciate their commitment and tireless fight for justice.

We thank and acknowledge all transgender Floridians, their families and allies, grassroots organizations and health care providers. Despite intimidation tactics, loss of income due to time away from work, and the need to travel on multiple occasions, they attended and spoke up at meetings of the Boards of Medicine and Osteopathy and hearings at the Capitol. Ultimately, their voices were heard.

The fight for equality is ongoing. However, these rulings, as well as the similar ruling in Arkansas this week and those coming in other states, should be celebrated and seen as motivation for further calls to action. We must continue to show up, speak out and vote.

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The Florida LGBTQ+ Democratic Caucus, represents lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer Floridians to the Florida Democratic Party (FDP). The Caucus has 21 chapters across Florida, from Pensacola to Jacksonville to Miami. More information is on our website, <https://www.lgbtqdems.org>