



LGBT+ ADOPTION IN NORTH CAROLINA

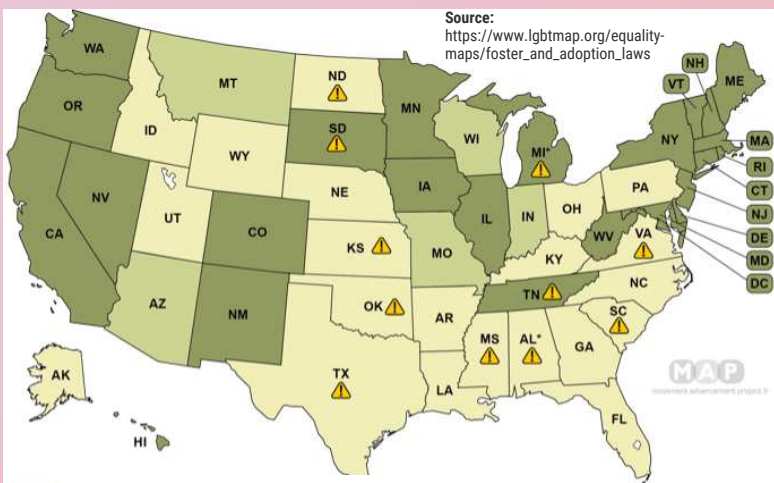


THE PROPOSAL

Since the barrier-breaking Supreme Court case *Obergefell v Hodges* that found marriage between same-sex couples to be a fundamental human right, the LGBT+ community in the United States has come a long way in the movement towards more rights and freedoms ¹. Today, there is greater LGBT+ representation in the media, more politicians are incorporating pro-LGBT+ policies, and more people feel comfortable to come out to their friends, families, and communities. However, the times have not completely changed. There are still hate crimes and protests against LGBT+ individuals. Many businesses will not sell to or hire a person based on their sexual orientation. Child service agencies also can turn away prospective parents if they identify as LGBT+. In North Carolina, there are no policies in place to protect these people from discrimination when looking to adopt or foster a child ². Every individual has basic human rights protected by the U.S. Constitution and parts of their identity that should not be discriminated against in any situation, such as gender, race, and sexual orientation. By passing legislation that prohibits the discrimination against LGBT+ prospective parents in adoption and foster care, these inalienable human rights can be upheld, more children can find permanent homes, and the state of North Carolina can be a more welcoming and accepting place to live.

STIGMA AROUND LGBT+ PARENTING

Many child service agencies favor heterosexual couples or even single heterosexual individuals over a married LGBT+ couple ¹. Despite common misconceptions, a person's sexual orientation has no effect on their parenting capacities ³. Research shows that a child with LGBT+ parents does not suffer from a lower quality of life, poorer psychological health, or poorer social functioning but instead has more empathy and social resilience than a child raised by heterosexual parents ³. LGBT+ parents are also found to be more attentive, show more warmth, and are more motivated and committed to having a family ³.



Source: <https://letters2president.org/letters/15931>

WHAT TYPE OF LEGISLATION DO OTHER STATES HAVE REGARDING THIS ISSUE? ¹

Looking at the map:

- 29 states have legislation prohibiting the discrimination in adoption/foster care based on sexual orientation
- 21 states do not have legislation prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation
- 11 of those 21 states allow child service agencies to deny LGBT+ individuals from adopting based on religious beliefs

ADOPTION STATISTICS

- The number of children in the foster care system in NC has been increasing steadily since 2012 [4](#)
- In 2017, over 11,000 children were in foster care with over 2,100 children waiting to be adopted [5, 4](#)
- LGBT+ parents are 4 times more likely to adopt than a heterosexual couple [3](#)
- 13% of same-sex couples have adopted a child while only 3% of heterosexual couples have adopted a child [3](#)
- Same-sex couples are more likely to have a non-white adopted child, which helps with typically lower adoption rates of non-white children [3](#)
- Studies show that LGBT+ parents view adoption as their primary option of raising a child [3](#)

17,000

U.S. CHILDREN AGED OUT OF FOSTER CARE IN 2017

Research shows that those who leave care without being adopted have a high risk of **homelessness, unemployment, and incarceration** as adults [6](#).

"Over 440,000 Children are Waiting to be Adopted in the US" [6](#)

RESULTING PROBLEMS

Around 17,000 children in the U.S. aged out of foster care in 2016, without a permanent family or home [6](#). Statistics show that they are more likely to be unemployed, homeless, and incarcerated.

Hundreds of thousands of children are waiting to be adopted in the United States [6](#). Because there are so many children housed in each facility, they have extremely limited amounts of food, clothing, and other resources.

Due to the overwhelming amount of children in these foster care systems, both state and federal governments have had to step in and **subsidize** or provide financial assistance to keep the facilities open [7](#). In 2016, NC spent a total of \$603,874,040 on child service agencies with over \$106,000,000 alone coming from state funds [8](#).

POLICY PROPOSAL

In order to mediate each of these problems, legislation that would ensure LGBT+ individuals can adopt and foster children should be enacted. There will be less children aging out of foster care, more children will find permanent, loving homes, and subsidies towards child service agencies can lessen and potentially be removed.

Creating legislation that strictly prohibits the discrimination based on sexual orientation in adoption and foster care is essential. Policies protecting the rights of the LGBT+ community are already lacking in North Carolina [9](#). Upholding *all* rights of *all* citizens should be the top priority of the state, and when it is not, attention must be brought to the lack thereof.

Policymakers should take the information given in this brief to develop the recommended legislation - prohibit the discrimination based on sexual orientation in adoption and foster care.

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