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## STONEWALL OPPOSES FLORIDA “DON'T SAY GAY” BILL

FORT LAUDERDALE, FL: Stonewall National Museum & Archives, located in Fort Lauderdale, today denounced Florida Senate Bill 1834. The legislation attempts to prohibit classroom teachers from discussing any individual's sexual orientation or gender identity.

The bill has passed one Senate committee and would need approval by the full Senate and House for consideration. Florida Governor Ronald DeSantis said he supports the measure and would sign the bill into law, should both houses of the legislature pass the measure.

Stonewall, issued the following statement today opposing the legislation:

**Stonewall National Museum & Archives denounces efforts by certain Florida legislators to prohibit mentioning an individual's sexual orientation or gender identity or teaching LGBTQ history in public schools. Sexual orientation – gay, straight and gender non-conforming – are facts of life. To not acknowledge these facts and intentionally omit them from children's education is doing them a disservice and creates an environment harmful to developing children. It is also detrimental to LGBTQ youth and adults who learn, teach and work in Florida's public schools. People should voice their opposition to this bill.**

"Just as it is not possible to legislate away the influence the LGBTQ community has had on our country's rich history, you also cannot simply make LGBTQ+ children 'go away' by refusing to recognize them or by not saying certain words in our schools," stated Jacki Bennett, Chair of SNMA's Board of Directors. "It is not possible to un-ring the bell of recognizing one's gender identity. It is a part of growing up and developing into the person you are. The Board of Directors stands behind SNMA's statement and with all those working across the state of Florida in opposing this legislation."

"While there are many supportive and inclusive people in the state, unfortunately, Florida has a long tradition of opposing gay people," said Stonewall Executive Director Hunter O'Hanian. "We only need to go back to the 1950s and '60s to see the efforts to entrap gay people and root

them out from the state colleges which lead to the [Johns Committee Report](#). Thankfully that was roundly vilified by nearly everyone – both conservative and liberal.”

“We can also look at the efforts of [Anita Bryant](#) and the ‘Save Our Children’ committee who tried to stop efforts in Miami-Dade county to offer equal protection to the LGBTQ community in the 1970s. That effort also failed.”

“What is sad about this current effort,” said O’Hanian, “is that yet again, children are being used to pursue a particular anti-gay agenda. It has failed in the past, and I predict it will fail again. Gay history is American history. Ignoring it will not erase the fact that it happened.”

An independent, non-profit educational entity, Stonewall was founded in 1973 and is one of the largest LGBTQ libraries and archives in the United States housing more than 28,000 books [Search Catalog](#) and 6 million pages of archival materials from 1950 to the present. [Search Archive Finding Aid](#)

Stonewall currently offers the following resources to parents, educators, and interested individuals:

- [In Plain Sight](#) (StonewallNMA.org) – Funded by the Florida Humanities Council, it is the largest known web-based platform of LGBTQ history. Topics include AIDS/HIV, Arts, Business, Film & Theatre, Literature, Memorials & Monuments, Milestones, Music, Sports, and Theatre & Dance.
- LGBTQ Study Aids on the following topics drawn from Stonewall’s Library:
  - Art History
  - Asian and Asian American Writing
  - Black Cultural Criticism
  - Black Queer Novels
  - Black Queer Poetry
  - Broadway
  - Catholic Church
  - Comics
  - Dance
  - Disco
  - Drag
  - Gardens, Farms, and Environment
  - HIV/AIDS
  - Immigration
  - Jewish Writing
  - Latinx
  - Military
  - Mental Health
  - Mormonism
  - Photography
  - Pride
  - Prison Stories

Science Fiction  
Sports  
Trans Fiction  
Trans Youth

- SNEP – Stonewall’s annual symposium on LGBTQ education and safety in schools. This year it will be held in Broward County (April 14-16, 2022) and focus on LGBTQ curriculum. [2022 Symposium Details](#)

In addition, Stonewall has more than 200 books in its juvenile and young adult sections. These titles are available to anyone interested, including teachers wishing to build inclusive classroom libraries. [Books for youth and parents](#)



At a recent Stonewall exhibition opening, a photograph of every attendee wearing a button which said, “Say Gay!” was taken and sent to the Florida governor. Anyone interested in getting a “Say Gay!” button can contact Stonewall at [Inquiry@Stonewall-Museum.org](mailto:Inquiry@Stonewall-Museum.org) or by stopping by.



### **About Stonewall National Museum & Archives**

Stonewall National Museum & Archives promotes understanding through collecting, preserving and sharing the proud culture of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer people of all stories, and their significant role in American society. SNMA currently presents a robust schedule of exhibitions and virtual programs. Visit [stonewall-museum.org](http://stonewall-museum.org).

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