



2020 Legislative Priorities

SPARK is committed to the promotion of legislation that advances a just and equitable society for Trans and Non-binary folx in Georgia.

Our focus will be rooted in how we can *SHIFT THE NARRATIVE*:

Shifting the narrative to center the experiences Trans and GNC folx in policy

Shifting the narrative of what it means to be civically engaged

Shifting the narrative to uplift Trans folx survival and happiness instead of trauma

SPARK is proud of the ways in which our community and partners mobilized against HB481, *the abortion ban*, during the 2019 legislative session. This year we commit to shift our energy away from prioritizing a response to policies rooted in violence in order to support those that enrich our community. We are still dedicated to the tracking of and dissemination of information related to regressive bills, but we will not permit white supremacy to dictate the work we do and the ways in which we move.

SPARK utilizes the Reproductive Justice framework which applies an intersectional analysis to social issues, it demands recognition of the full context of a person's life and the unique social conditions we each navigate and live within. SPARK defines Reproductive Justice as a social justice movement rooted in the belief that individuals and communities should have the resources and power to make sustainable and liberatory decisions about their bodies, genders, sexualities, and lives.

Obstacles to an individual's self-determination, including, but not limited to, gender and racial discrimination affects their reproductive freedom. Therefore, dignity for incarcerated folx, HIV decriminalization, housing equity, and resources for immigrants are reproductive justice issues and will be the focus of SPARK's 2020 legislative priorities. We are cognizant that these injustices are tied to larger systems such as capitalism and settler colonialism. That's why our training, conversations, and materials disseminated during session will include information on how specific policies are tied to larger systems.

SPARK Reproductive Justice NOW

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2020 Legislative Priorities

As of Tuesday, February 4, 2020

Since it is the second year of a two-year session in Georgia, lawmakers have the ability to revive legislation that failed to pass during the 2019 session by the time they adjourn in 2020. Legislation could also be revived this year if lawmakers find opportunities to add their bills onto legislation that has already passed, which is permitted if they are in the same code section of state statutes.

*Bills marked * were introduced during the 2019 legislative session.*

SPARK supports the following:

H.B. 719 – HIV Decriminalization

This legislation provides for the modernization of HIV related laws to align with science to ensure that laws and policies support current understanding of best public health practices for preventing and treating HIV, scientific evidence about routes of transmission, and the public health goals of promoting HIV prevention and treatment.

Status – Introduced on January 13, 2020.

H.B 745 - Georgia Dignity in Pregnancy and Childbirth Act

Would require evidence based implicit bias training for perinatal facilities as well as the compilation and tracking of data on severe maternal morbidity and pregnancy related deaths.

Status- House Second Readers January 16, 2020; House Health and Human Services Committee

S.B. 324 - Maternal Health

Would extend Medicaid coverage to twelve months for pregnant folx.

Status - Introduced January 29, 2020

S.B. 286 - Combating Hair Discrimination

Addresses what is considered “professional” at work, school or when seeking housing and bans institutions from discriminating based on how hair is styled.

Status - Introduced January 27, 2020

***H.B. 19 - State Civil Rights Act**

The act would create nondiscrimination protections in housing, employment, and in public spaces mirroring the 1964 federal Civil Rights Act prohibiting discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, disability, familial status or national origin.

Status: The act was introduced during the 2019 legislative session and stalled in the House Judiciary committee without a hearing, but may be revived during the 2020 session.

***H.B. 133 - Quality Basic Education Act**

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This legislation requires any course of study in Sex education and HIV/AIDS prevention to be medically accurate.

Status - Introduced in 2019, but may be revived during the 2020 session.

***H.B. 158 - Medicaid/ADAP formulary sync**

Introduced during the 2019 legislative session, this bill would require Medicaid to follow the Georgia AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP) formulary for HIV medicines. This legislation would remove delays in accessing HIV medication for folks living with HIV due to differences in the formularies.

Status: This bill passed the House and ultimately stalled in the Senate. However, the Department of Community Health, which oversees the state Medicaid program, has pledged to accomplish the same goal through creating rules and regulations.

***H.B. 475 – "Dignity Behind Bars"**

This legislation is referred to as "Dignity Behind Bars" and would allow more access to menstrual care products for all incarcerated persons as well as more assistance with pumping for parents who have just given birth in order to get their breast milk to caregivers.

Status: This bill was introduced during the 2019 legislative session and was not given a hearing.

***H.B. 580 - Conversion Therapy Ban**

This bill would ban conversion therapy in the state of Georgia

Status: This bill was introduced during the 2019 legislative session, but may be revived during the 2020 session.

***H.B. 634 - Wage Transparency & Economic Justice**

This bill would make it mandatory for employers to be transparent with all employees about salary information.

Status: This bill was introduced during the 2019 legislative session, but may be revived during the 2020 session.

***H.B. 636 - Police Accountability and Criminal Justice Reform**

This bill would make reporting the use of force by officers mandatory for all police departments.

Status: This bill was introduced during the 2019 legislative session, but may be revived during the 2020 session.

SPARK Opposes the Following:

H.B. 747 – Opposing Trans athletes in collegiate sports

Would prohibit public universities in the state from hosting athletic competitions in which "a person who is not biological male is allowed to participate in athletic events conducted exclusively for males or a person who is not biological female is allowed to participate in athletic events conducted exclusively for females."

Status – Pre-filed in the House on December 19, 2019

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H.B. 1060 - Criminalizing gender affirming care for minors

Summary - This legislation would make it a felony for medical professionals to assist minors with gender transition. Under current law, parental consent is required for minors to obtain gender affirming surgery or medication. The legislation would effectively criminalize private medical decisions made between families in consultation with medical and mental health professionals. Young folks must be given the autonomy to make decisions regarding gender identity, including gender affirming care.

Similar legislation has been proposed in at least fourteen other states since the start of the 2020 legislative session. This wave of anti-Trans legislation comes after a national backlash derailed most state efforts to enact “bathroom bills” that would require folks to use sex-segregated facilities that correspond to their sex assigned at birth.

Bills restricting Trans minors’ access to gender reassignment treatments, including surgery and hormone therapy range from making the practice illegal for physicians to administer the treatment, while others would classify the act as child abuse. Many of the bills proposed utilize nearly identical language, which is proof of a national effort to restrict access to hormone therapy and gender reassignment surgery for minors.

Status – The bill was introduced on February 27, 2020.

S.B. 368 - Permitting adoption agencies to deny prospective parents on religious grounds

Summary- The bill would allow agencies to refuse to place children with same sex couples or those whose religious beliefs do not align with the organizations’ mission. The bill would permit agencies to refuse to work with couples that violate “certain religious or moral convictions.”

Status - The bill was introduced on February 5, 2020.

***S.B. 221 – “Religious Liberty” legislation**

Summary - Allows for businesses to refuse services to Queer and Trans customers and gives tax-payer funded agencies a license to discriminate. This year, Georgia Governor Brian Kemp has said he will sign a RFRA bill if passed if it is a copy of the federal legislation.

Status – Stalled in Senate Judiciary committee without a hearing, however, the unresolved bill could resume progress during the 2020 session.

2020-2021 Budget

According to the Georgia Constitution, passing the state budget is the only thing lawmakers are mandated to do annually. Lawmakers will spend a significant portion of the 2020 session reviewing and deciding on Governor Kemp’s proposal to cut 10% in spending over the next two-years. They will also decide whether to cut the state’s income tax rate for the second time in three years - from 5.75% to 5.5%, which would mean further spending cuts for state agencies.

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