



THE TORCH

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SB 6: The Texas Privacy Act

By **Trayce Bradford**, Texas Eagle Forum President

The Texas Privacy Act, often referred to as the “Bathroom Bill,” is now sitting on the House side of the 85th Legislative Session. But on the day of public hearing in the Texas Senate, March 7th, over 250 people signed up to testify. The hearing lasted 21 hours and concluded at 5 am on March 8th. I knew we would be in the minority in supporting SB 6 when I signed up to testify at 7:15 am. As the day wore on, there were many opinions, misconceptions, heartbreaking stories and hateful rants from both sides.

Chairwoman Senator Joan Huffman (R-Houston) and her committee permitted all to speak their views and did a great job of being organized and thoughtful throughout the hearing. At times the committee was harassed and spoken to disrespectfully by some testifying against the bill, but members managed to keep their composure, granting those folks the opportunity to voice their concerns.

I don’t think many testifying for or against the bill thought their arguments would change anyone’s mind but all wanted to speak. Many

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of the people had not actually read the bill because they kept making references to issues not included in the actual legislation.

The opposition primarily referenced the discriminatory language of the bill, and the potential damage to transgender people and the Texas economy. Honestly, I was perplexed when I learned that a business leader actually testified against SB 6 before the language was drafted—the chairman of that organization admitted that at the hearing!

Sitting in the “on deck” overflow room were those waiting to testify. No matter what someone tried to say in support of SB 6, those comments drew the anger of the attendees in the room. I was definitely taken aback by the intolerance exemplified by those espousing “tolerance.” I don’t believe that those speaking against SB 6 and their demonstrative actions reflect the beliefs of the majority of Texans. Many were responding out of emotion and fear and not to the actual language in the bill.

I heard many angry people throughout the day, but the most insensitive comments were hurled in our direction, mocking my friend as we ate lunch. My friend had already shared her testimony describing her story of being a victim of a sexual predator in a restroom. We had prayed earlier in the day to show the love of Christ regardless of what happened, and that was the attitude we tried to maintain for the entire day.

While many may think SB 6 came as a reaction to the situation in Fort Worth ISD at the end of last school year by a rogue superintendent, who sought to force new policies on the district without parental knowledge, the battle actually surfaced 18 months earlier. The first shot was fired when a tiny school district was approached by a law firm with a program for implementing the new “transgender guidelines.” My friend, who shared this information with me, was shocked at the speed with which this school administration approved these policies changes. Keep in mind these were not policy changes based on the law at that time, but on opinion. Fort Worth ISD is one of many school districts facing these pressures as they spread to other school districts across the state.

People, including the media, miss the point that this issue is

not just about restrooms, but includes showers, locker rooms, and overnight stays for school trips. These encroaching policies also impact who plays on which teams for sports. Should biological boys, identifying as girls, compete against girls in sports such as wrestling, track, or swimming?

After all the time I have spent researching and diligently fighting to pass this bill, I am still baffled at why we are here. Do we seriously believe that opening up locker rooms, showers, bathrooms, and sports is healthy and safe for ALL children? Do we support burdening teachers to monitor these issues in addition to the responsibilities of teaching? People keep saying you can’t legislate morality. Really? Someone’s morality is going to win and become part of our laws. We have legislated morality since the beginning of time.

I want to make a point here. NO ONE has said that transgenders are the ones who are going to attack children or women. That NEVER has been the issue! Please keep the facts straight: **this common-sense bill is to keep women and children protected from sexual predators who might use this as an excuse to do harm.** That’s exactly what the bill’s author, Senator Lois Kolkhorst (R-Brenham), was trying to get across to members, when she said, “While the media makes it so much about transgender [issues], this is a bill to say men should not go into the women’s restroom.”

It is absolutely astonishing to me that an entire society can be bullied into accepting something that endangers women and children; and, if we refuse, we are immediately deemed bigots and haters. SB 6 seeks to provide a solution for all: transgender students who are nervous or fearful at school regarding restroom accommodations, as well as the overwhelming number of students who want to keep their privacy and be kept safe from sexual predators.

As Texans we must work together to find a solution to protect **all** children and women and do it in an ingenious way that only Texans CAN do!

WHAT YOU CAN DO: Read Texas Values’ Talking Points on SB 6, ask your state representatives to support the bill and pray.

Taxpayers Are the Real “Forgotten Man”

By **Dr. Merrill Matthews**, *PolicyBytes*, Institute for Policy Innovation, 2/28/17

“**T**he forgotten men and women of our country will be forgotten no longer,” President Donald Trump said in his January 20 inauguration speech. “Everyone is listening to you now.”

Who is the forgotten man? Author Amity Shlaes told us in her 2007 book, *The Forgotten Man*. When Yale Professor William

Graham Sumner first uttered the term at an 1883 lecture in Brooklyn, he was referring to average taxpayers who are compelled to pay for the various government programs that politicians devise.

“Who is, then, the Forgotten Man? He is the clean, quiet, virtuous, domestic citizen, who pays his debts and his taxes, and is never heard of out of his little circle. ... The Forgotten Man is

Six Essential Talking Points About SB 6

- 1) **SB 6 protects the privacy and safety of our schoolchildren.** Our public school students are at risk due in large part to the Obama administration's federal "bathroom" directive that attempts to force all public schools in the nation to adopt policies which allow boys in girls' bathrooms, showers, and locker rooms. Fort Worth ISD recently implemented such a policy but thanks to the hard work of concerned parents, community members, and taxpayers, the school board rescinded that dangerous measure. The Legislature must act to defend students in communities where parents and concerned taxpayers do not have the resources to effectively fight back.
- 2) **SB 6 keeps men out of girls' restrooms.** The bill requires all government buildings to continue the common sense practice that men and women should use the bathrooms, showers, or locker rooms that correspond to the sex listed on their birth certificate. SB 6 will help a growing number of persons who have felt threatened or have been abused in restrooms and changing facilities as a result of dangerous bathroom policies.
- 3) **SB 6 protects the freedom of businesses to set their own policies.** Private businesses will remain free to set their own rules regarding restrooms, locker rooms, and changing areas. This is in stark contrast to legislation filed by the other side, which attempts to force businesses to allow men into the women's restroom. Furthermore, SB 6 prevents local governments and state agencies from telling private businesses who may use which facility, or from withholding contracts from private business vendors which set their own policies.
- 4) **Texans overwhelmingly support this common-sense legislation.** The people of Texas agree that public restrooms, showers, and locker rooms should be restricted by sex. The groundswell of public support we received in Houston and

during our successful fight against the Fort Worth ISD's bathroom policy shows that families want the protections SB 6 provides. There have been many polls conducted which indicate high levels of public support for state action in defending our restrooms from government interference. The only time voters had a say at the ballot box was when they soundly rejected (61–39 percent) Houston's attempt to dictate bathroom policy.

There will be no "bathroom police" as some critics have ridiculously claimed.

- 5) **SB 6 is good news for businesses.** Texas is the 10th largest economy in the world, with a friendly business climate and some helpful laws on the books that defend our values. Houston, Texas' largest city, hosted the Super Bowl after voters took a stand against Houston's ordinance. The Texas Association of Business erroneously claimed the Texas economy would lose \$8.5 billion and 185,000 jobs under SB 6, basing their "analysis" on a similar religious freedom law Texas has had for over 16 years. The truth is North Carolina, which passed its landmark privacy legislation, HB 2, continues to be the second-best state in the U.S. in which to operate a business. The states with the strongest economies have overwhelmingly not adopted policies which force businesses and public institutions to allow men into the women's restroom.
- 6) **SB 6 empowers individuals.** All citizens may file a written complaint with the Attorney General under SB 6 when they feel their privacy and dignity is being violated in a restroom or changing area, and the AG's office has the power to investigate those complaints and sue entities which violate women's and children's rights. There will be no "bathroom police" as some critics have ridiculously claimed. Individuals with particular concerns are afforded numerous accommodations with access to private facilities that also respect the privacy of others.

never a pauper. He almost always has a little capital ... The Forgotten Man is weighted down with the cost and burden of the schemes for making everybody happy, with the cost of public beneficence, with the support of all the loafers, with the loss of all the economic quackery, with the cost of all the jobs."

But when President Franklin D. Roosevelt used the term in 1932 during the Great Depression, he had in mind those at the bottom of the economic pyramid. "These unhappy times call for the building of plans that rest upon the forgotten, the unorganized but the indispensable units of economic power, ... that put their faith once more in the forgotten man at the bottom of the economic pyramid."

It's hard to make the case that the poor were "forgotten" in

the last election. Hillary Clinton and Bernie Sanders hammered the themes of poverty and inequality everywhere they went—and President Obama before them. And both wanted millions of unnamed taxpayers to fund their schemes.

Trump's definition seems to return to the original. Or as Sumner put it, "He works, he votes, generally he prays—but he always pays—yes, above all, he pays. He does not want an office; his name never gets into the newspaper except when he gets married or dies. He keeps production going on. He contributes to the strength of parties. He is flattered before election. He is strongly patriotic. ... Such is the Forgotten Man."

And last November they rose up to say they wouldn't be forgotten, at least not this time.

The Passing of a Stalwart for the Unborn

Texas Eagle Forum mourns the passing of **Colleen Parro Baillargeon**, one of the original founders of the Republican National Coalition for Life (RNC for Life), and longtime member of TEF. Colleen began working with Phyllis Schlafly in the 1970s, serving as the national issues chairman for the Strategic Defense Initiative, and later as the executive director of RNC for Life. She helped launch the movement that solidified the Republican Party as the Pro-Life Party. “There never was a truer friend to LIFE than Colleen Parro Baillargeon,” said Cathie Adams, former president of TEF. “For more than two decades she fought for the most vulnerable among us, the pre-born. Her faithful service to Phyllis Schlafly and Eagle Forum was rewarded with tremendous successes that will long be remembered by those who shared her stalwart dedication to God, family, and country.”

Time to Walkout On “Day of Silence”

Should boys be allowed access to girls’ restrooms, locker rooms, and showers? This is what we were all supposed to accept in America in 2017. Like many of you, we are not buying it. Thanks to last year’s illegitimate Obama administration edict, many public schools have already started allowing gender-dysphoric students to access opposite-sex private spaces, often without informing parents. The “Day of Silence 2017” is likely to ratchet up the rhetoric on the bathroom issue (students take a vow of silence “to raise awareness about the silencing effect of anti-LGBT bullying, harassment, and discrimination”). Let’s stand together against normalizing sexual deviance and oppose the Day of Silence organized and promoted by the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN). This year’s event is scheduled for **Friday, April 21, 2017**. SOURCE: Linda Harvey, missionforamerica.org, 3/7/17

NOTE: If your school district is participating in this year’s Day of Silence, let them know your opinion on this misuse of instructional time and educational resources.

Trump to PP: Funding Stays If Abortion Goes

The White House recently proposed a plan to keep funding Planned Parenthood if the organization discontinued providing abortions, *The New York Times* reported. “As I said throughout the campaign, I am pro-life, and I am deeply committed to investing in women’s health, and plan to significantly increase federal funding in support of non-abortion services such as cancer screenings,” President Donald Trump told the *Times*. “Polling shows the majority of Americans oppose public funding for abortion, even those who identify as pro-choice. There is an opportunity for organizations to continue the important work they do in support of women’s health, while not providing abortion services.” The offer was rejected by Planned Parenthood officials. “Planned Parenthood is *proud* to provide abortion—a *necessary* service that’s as vital to our mission as birth control or cancer screenings,” tweeted PP President Cecile Richards in response to the proposal.

SOURCE: Carson News, 3/7/17

Encouraging News

Generation Y, or Millennials as they are often called, are increasingly making headlines for their growing impact on America’s economic, cultural, and political landscapes. They have numerically surpassed the Baby Boomers. They are generally liberal and, for a variety of reasons, seem to like socialism. Not very encouraging is it? Well, here’s some hopeful news: Christian author Eric Metaxas notes that early studies suggest that the generation coming behind the Millennials, Generation Z, “may be, by certain measures, the most conservative generation since World War II.” Having been raised in the aftermath of 9/11 and the Great Recession, they tend to identify as “fiscally conservative” on economic issues, have a “more pragmatic” view of the world and even identify as more conservative on social issues than their Millennial elders.

SOURCE: Gary Bauer, American Values, 3/17/2017

Quote of the Month

“Communist rhetoric of equality and social justice entices and mesmerizes well-fed and clothed American millennials who are surrounded by wealth, food, proper medical care, good housing, transportation, college education paid by Pell grants, electronic gadgets, Starbucks lattes, cars, and malls. They have no idea what communist life was and is like. Thoroughly brainwashed, millennials dismiss as propaganda all testimonials of those who had lived under communism, survived and escaped to the west.”

~ Dr. Ileana Johnson Paugh
“#Resist, a Global Commie Resistance Movement,”
Canada Free Press, 3/14/17

Great American Quote

“To compel a man to subsidize with his taxes the propagation of ideas which he disbelieves and abhors is sinful and tyrannical.”

~ Thomas Jefferson

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