

Brand Statement: **Together Rising** transforms collective heartbreak into effective action. We are a non-profit that supports individuals and families through direct grants of funds or goods, and grants to partner organisations that are doing the work on-location.

Background:

March 8, 2022: Florida state Republicans passed a bill that forbids classroom discussion of sexual orientation and gender identity from kindergarten to Grade 3, "or in a manner that is not age-appropriate or developmentally appropriate for students in accordance with state standards"¹.

Potential 2024 presidential candidate and Republican Gov. Ron DeSantis is expected to sign it into law. The state of Florida has garnered increased attention as of late over its Republican-dominated culture war legislation efforts².

The "Don't Say Gay" bill, as dubbed by critics, has generated intense push-back from the White House, students, LGBTQIA2S+ advocates, national Democrats, and international media³. Several protests and student walkouts using the tagline "We say gay!" have countered attempts at silencing educators, stigmatizing LGBTQIA2S+ youth, and marginalizing queer families⁴.

Our Response:

While supporters of the bill claim to uphold "parental rights" in filtering what their children learn in school, Together Rising wholeheartedly stands by the opposition and rejects any efforts to silence educators and prevent them from teaching students about sexual orientation, gender identity, and human rights. This bill coming into law would perpetuate homophobia, transphobia, biphobia, and increase the marginalization of LGBTQIA2S+ youth and queer families – a demographic that is already vulnerable to suicide, bullying and targeted violence.

In response, this campaign would approve grants totaling \$150,000 to three partner organisations that provide care and support for LGBTQIA2S+ communities across Florida: **Compass Community Center**, **JASMYN**, and **Zebra Coalition**. We would fund these boots-on-the-ground organisations who are well-positioned to respond to this crisis. They would provide mental health support, medical care, school resources, and housing support services⁵.

Target Audience(s):

LGBTQIA2S+ youth and families in Florida.

Primary

LGBTQIA2S+ youth and families in Texas.

They are also currently experiencing a legislative threat to their existence, rights, and safety (Gov. Greg Abbott's Anti-Trans Directive)

Secondary

All LGBTQIA2S+ youth and families in the US.

They face a risk of systemic discrimination as a wave of Republican-led culture war narratives is sweeping through the country.

Several other states are considering similar legislation.

Tertiary

Campaign Voice:

Our voice speaks directly to our audience's sensibilities and emotional investment in creating a safer, more authentic, nurturing, and equitable country.

We will offer a calm, affirming and comforting tone to youth and families in distress due to the negative impact of the bill.

To society as a whole, we will communicate our collective responsibility to care for our most vulnerable population.

Key Messages:

Primary: we will join the refrain in response to the bill and its potential impact, "We Say Gay."

Secondary: "There's no such thing as other people's children.", which communicates collective responsibility in the cause.

Both the primary and secondary messages will be repeated across all deliverables.

Tertiary: we are investing \$150,000 to the three organisations and we invite others to donate to this cause. This message highlights concrete action.

Campaign Goals:

- For LGBTQIA2S+ youth and queer families to feel actively supported, affirmed, and advocated
- To spread messages of collective responsibility in the cause
- To demonstrate our concrete efforts in the form of grants to organisations on the ground
- Amplify our three partner organisations across social media platforms by highlighting the work that they are doing
- Increase donations to our advocacy fund to continue our efforts in Florida, Texas and elsewhere. We will create a CTA to donate at **TogetherRising.org/Give**.

Measurables:

Our key strategy to reach a successful outcome is to:

1. Connect those who want to help with those who need it
2. Openly communicate the impact of donations through social media, and
3. Grow our community of financial, social, and personal investment – allowing us to support more LGBTQIA2S+ youth and queer families in Florida.

We will measure our campaign's success by tracking:

- The total dollars received in donations (*input, resources we will use to help LGBTQIA2S+ youth and queer families*)
- The total dollar amount of grants awarded (*output, our activities and reach*)
- The total number of grants awarded (*output, our activities and reach*)

We will measure the success of its communications by reviewing:

- The number of comments, quote tweets, likes/reacts and shares/retweets, relative to other campaigns
- The messages and tone of comments and quoted tweets

If the above is met, **our campaign's success will be considered exceeded** if this discriminatory state legislation is ultimately repealed and blocked – a concrete milestone in eradicating systemic violence against LGBTQIA2S+ communities across the US.

Timing:

Since the legislation is on its way to Gov. DeSantis's desk, time is of the essence.

Similar to our other recent campaigns, this one will be a quick blast: a blog, a Facebook post, an Instagram story and post, and a Twitter photo.

To ensure a quick blast, the image with the concise information will be the same across all social media platforms. The copy in the blog post and the captions for the Facebook and Instagram post will be the same. We may be able to tag our partner organisations in the Instagram post.

Deliverables:

Strategic considerations regarding Twitter: the simplest way to include the same copy as the other platforms would be a thread like we did with the [Texas campaign](#).

A major downside is that our previous threads have attracted trolls posting offensive and harmful comments that particularly undermine our message of support and affirmation of LGBTQIA2S+ youth.

To mitigate this risk, we could disable commenting and retweeting on this platform (and account for this in our measurables). If needed, we could also limit the number of "targets" to a single tweet including the campaign image (as on the other platforms) with less copy.