

Biden Administration Announces Openness to Third Gender Option on Federal IDs

President Joe Biden marked International Women's Day Monday by signing two executive orders on gender fairness, a White House press briefing announced yesterday. The first established a White House Gender Policy Council "to ensure that the Biden administration advances gender equity and equal rights and opportunity for women and girls." The second "directs the Department of Education to review all of its existing regulations, orders, guidance and policies for consistency with the administration's policy to guarantee education free from sexual violence."

One of the more significant elements of the briefing, however, came as a response to a reporter's question about whether the president would sign an executive order to mandate offering a "third gender option" on federal IDs. The reporter noted that both Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris had supported such an issue during their campaign toward the White House.

Male

Female

Other

The White House signaled its openness to adding a third gender option to federal IDs.

— Washington Examiner (@dcexaminer) March 8, 2021

"I haven't looked yet to whether that requires an executive order," Jennifer Klein, the executive director of the White House Gender Policy Council," responded, adding, "I would note that we are very inclusive in our definition of gender, and we

intend to address all sorts of discrimination, and, you know, fight for equal rights for people, whether that's LGBTQ+ people, women, girls, men. So, you know, that's certainly something that we will look at. But I honestly don't know whether that requires an executive order."

Several states, including California, Colorado, Indiana, Maryland, Minnesota, Nevada and Utah as well the federal district of Washington, D.C., already have third-gender options in place for state-issued IDs and other documents, per the Washington Blade. And on Biden's first day in office, he signed an order adding gender-neutral pronouns to the White House website's contact page.

The American Civil Liberties Union is calling on Biden to place "X" gender markers on all federal documents within his first 100 days in office, requesting this take place through executive action, according to *Newsweek*. Arli Christian, an ACLU campaign strategist, told the outlet that changes in the use of gender marks are the best way to fight discrimination against "transgender, intersex and non-binary people," adding that "an executive order is the best way to ensure consistency across all the federal agencies. So far, over 70,000 people have signed on to the ACLU's petition calling for the White House to issue this order."

A December 2019 Pew Research study showed 42% of Americans favor adding the third gender option to online profiles. {eo}

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