

This Governor Has Already Done What Others Wouldn't

One year ago, a Republican governor faced immense opposition to a bill that would “discriminate against the LGBT community,” according to many opponents.

Texas Gov. Greg Abbott unflinchingly signed that bill—the Pastor Protection Act—into law.

The outrage was just as intense as what we saw the last few weeks in Georgia and North Carolina. One opponent of the legislation even went so far as to pen an op-ed for *The Hill* titled “Mixing Christianity and Politics Is Killing the Church.”

What those opponents didn't tell anyone is that the Texas bill, just like the Georgia and North Carolina legislation, was bipartisan. Yes, they originated from Republican legislators, but when the final votes were tallied, Democrats voted in favor of religious freedom too.

In fact, some of them in Texas openly welcomed it.

“I truly believe that there is space for LGBT justice and religious freedom and this, I feel, is the space for that,” said state Rep. Mary González (D-Clint), who calls herself the only “openly pansexual” elected official in the U.S.

Her colleague, state Rep. Celia Israel (D-Austin), who is a lesbian and a Catholic, urged the other House members to vote in favor of the legislation. Saying she planned to someday “marry” her long-time lesbian partner, she said pastors who didn't agree shouldn't have to worry about being forced to do something they opposed.

In fact, Equality Texas even dropped its opposition to the

bill. It passed with overwhelming support—only two representatives voted against it.