

Every Public Single-Stall Bathroom Open to All Genders in California

Single-stall public restrooms in California will be open to anyone regardless of gender under a bill signed by Democratic Governor Jerry Brown on Thursday that is being hailed as an advance of transgender rights.

Access to public bathrooms has become a flashpoint in the battle over transgender rights in the United States, where some states including California already let transgender students use locker rooms and restrooms in accordance with their gender identities. Opponents fear that sexual predators will pose as transgender bathroom users in order to find victims.

The most populous U.S. state already bars discrimination against transgender people, including in public restrooms. The latest measure goes further, saying that single-use restrooms should not be reserved for one sex.

In addition to making it clear that people may use single-stall restrooms in accordance with their gender-identities, the measure will also make it easier for everyone to use restrooms at busy locations, supporters said.

Allowing transgender people to use restrooms in accordance with their gender identities is the focus of ongoing disputes in several states. North Carolina earlier this year enacted a measure mandating that multiple-use bathrooms and locker rooms be restricted according to a person's biological gender.

That law has prompted protests and boycotts, and in August, a U.S. District Court judge ruled that the state must allow two transgender students and a transgender employee to use

bathrooms matching their gender identity.

The U.S. Supreme Court is set to decide within weeks whether to hear a major transgender rights case for the first time, a dispute involving which bathroom a Virginia high school student can use.

State law already requires California schools to allow students to use restrooms in accordance with their gender identities. The new law does not affect multi-stall bathrooms.
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