News




Let's Go Washington staff member Josh Johnson, left, helps a volunteer while phone banking in support of Washington State Initiative 638, which would prohibit transgender girls from competing in girls' sports, Monday, Oct. 19, 2026, in Bellevue, Wash. (RNS/AP/Lindsey Wasson)

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In most of the states where access to sports for transgender youth and LGBTQ+ rights were on the ballot, voters supported measures that restricted those rights — some of the measures backed by faith groups, including states' Catholic conferences.

Here's a breakdown of the measures on ballots across the country on Tuesday (Nov. 3) and what voters decided.

**Washington state**

Washington voters approved (57%) Initiative 638, which bans students assigned male at birth from competing in K-12 school and nonprofit girls sports competitions. The law will also require all students to submit documentation issued by a healthcare provider verifying any student's biological sex before participating in girls sports. The Washington Catholic Conference supported the measure.

**Arizona**

In Arizona, nearly 59% of voters approved Proposition 318 to require schools and athletic associations to allow students, athletes and employees to use only the restrooms, locker rooms, shower rooms and private spaces that match the gender on their birth certificate. And the law requires students to compete only on school athletic teams that correspond with their sex at birth.

**Missouri**

In Missouri, voters rejected an amendment that would have prohibited abortion, with some exceptions, and access to gender-affirming care for minors. The measure was supported by the Missouri Catholic Conference and Priests for Life.

**Virginia**

A 2006 Virginia constitutional amendment defines marriage as between a man and a woman. Since the legalization of same-sex marriage by the U.S. Supreme Court in 2015, the law has been inoperative. However, on Tuesday, 57% voted to remove the state ban on same-sex marriage.

The measure was supported by Jews United for Justice and opposed by the Family Foundation, a Christian nonprofit, and the Virginia Catholic Conference. The Catholic conference released a video in October in which the Rev. Michael F. Burbidge, bishop of the Diocese of Arlington, said "ballot question No. 1, abortion, and ballot Question 2, marriage, concern fundamental matters of right and wrong."

"We affirm the dignity of every person," said Rev. Barry Knestout, bishop of the Diocese of Richmond, in the same video. "We also proclaim the truth that marriage created by God is and will always be the union of a man and a woman."

In a statement released Nov. 4, the bishops said they were disappointed by the results but praised the efforts of Virginia Catholics who campaigned on the issues. "Their steadfast efforts were firmly grounded in truth and justice. We express our heartfelt appreciation to all who gave sacrificially of their time, energy and expertise to defend the sanctity of life and marriage.

Though this collective effort did not prevail, the commitment and perseverance poured into it glorify God nevertheless," read the statement.

**Nebraska**

In Nebraska, 68% of voters supported Measure 442, which amends the state’s constitution to require schools to designate athletic teams as either male, female or mixed, and prohibits those assigned male at birth from participation on girls teams.

**Colorado**

In Colorado, results for the two ballot issues on gender-affirming care and sex-verification requirements for sports competition had not been called as of publication time.

At the time of publication, 52% of voters had said yes to Proposition 135, which would bar healthcare professionals from performing surgeries "altering biological characteristics" on minors, according to the measure. It also prohibits the use of state and federal funds, Medicaid and insurance coverage to reimburse the procedures.

And thus far, 53% of voters have said yes to Proposition 134, which would restrict participation in school sports based on players’ biological sex. The Colorado Catholic Conference urged voters to support both measures in its midterm voting guide.

**Vermont**

In Vermont, 79% of voters approved amending the constitution to prohibit any denial of rights based on sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression, as well as sex, disability, race, ethnicity and national origin.

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