

# EXHIBIT 2

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS  
HOUSTON DIVISION**

GSA Network, Students Engaged in  
Advancing Texas, Rebecca Roe, by and  
through her next friend, Ruth Roe, and Polly  
Poe,

Plaintiffs,

v.

Mike Morath, in an official capacity as  
Commissioner of the Texas Education  
Agency, Houston ISD, Katy ISD, and Plano  
ISD,

Defendants.

Civil Action No.

**Declaration of Maya LaFlamme Washington**

Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1746, I, Maya LaFlamme Washington, declare as follows:

1. I am the co-Executive Director of the Genders & Sexualities Alliance Network (“GSA Network”). I have served in this role since 2024.
2. GSA Network is a national 501(c)(3) nonprofit, membership organization. Its mission is to empower and train queer, transgender, and allied youth leaders to advocate, organize, and mobilize an intersectional movement for safer schools and healthier communities. GSA Network’s Core Belief is that trans, queer, and two-spirit (“TQ2S+”)<sup>1</sup> youth exist, belong, and have the right to self-determination. This mission and Core Belief are reflected in GSA

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<sup>1</sup> “Trans, Queer and Two-Spirit+” is the term we use to describe our base. “Trans” is an umbrella term to describe a broad range of gender identities that differ from the sex assigned at birth. “Queer” is an umbrella term that describe sexual orientations other than heterosexuality and include people who identify as lesbian, gay, and bisexual. “Two-Spirit” is a modern umbrella term utilized by some Indigenous North Americans to describe gender identities that do not fit within a binary understanding of gender. We more recently began utilizing the acronym TQ2S+ to describe our base instead of the more popularized acronym “LGBTQ+” which is reflected in some of our older materials such as our bylaws.

Network's Bylaws, which state that "GSA Network identifies and develops LGBTQ+<sup>2</sup> and allied youth leaders, training and mentoring young people to advocate for themselves and to organize for racial, economic, and social justice, beginning in the schools."

3. Racial, gender, and LGBTQ+ rights are at the core of GSA Network's activities and the activities of the Genders and Sexualities Alliance clubs ("GSA clubs") in its network. While GSA Clubs choose their own activities and agendas for their meetings, activities by GSA clubs are often related to TQ2S+ issues and/or racial justice.
4. GSA clubs provide a place for TQ2S+ and allied students to meet each other, form community bonds, advocate for TQ2S+ rights and racial justice, and support each other's identities, including students who have socially transitioned or are socially transitioning.
5. GSA Network brings claims in this lawsuit on behalf of itself and its members. If S.B. 12 is permitted to take effect, it would prevent GSA Network from being able to support GSA clubs and their activities in Texas, prevent student members from being able to form or join GSA clubs in Texas, and prohibit or drastically limit many of the activities that GSA Network and GSA clubs engage in at schools. This prevents the freedom of speech and expressive association of GSA clubs that are members of GSA Network and students who are involved in those GSA clubs in ways that also impede GSA Network's mission and operations.

#### **GSA Network's Structure and Membership**

6. GSA Network is governed by our Board of Directors, half of whom are young people currently in school or recent graduates.
7. GSA Network is a membership-based organization with three different types of members: the GSA clubs registered with GSA Network; the student leaders organizing GSA clubs registered with GSA Network; and the state-level organization partners in the National Association of GSA Networks.
8. GSA clubs in schools can register as members of the GSA Network. GSA Network provides resources and support to these clubs. These clubs are typically organized around the goal of advancing TQ2S+ rights and equality. We also allow clubs which advocate for other social justice issues, including racial justice or TQ2S+ issues to register as well. The names of the GSA clubs registered with GSA Network differ from school to school and do not always make explicit that they are GSA clubs and may reflect student leaders' creativity. GSA Network provides resources and support to the clubs in our Network. The clubs are student-led, and almost all have a school faculty sponsor who supervises, provides

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<sup>2</sup> "LGBTQ+" is an "acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning or queer: an inclusive term used to refer to the diverse forms of gender identity and sexual orientation, and to those whose gender identity differs from the culturally and socially determined gender roles for their assigned sex." "LGBTQ," APA Dictionary of Psychology, American Psychological Association (last updated Nov. 15, 2023), <https://dictionary.apa.org/lgbtq>.

guidance, and assists with leadership transition and maintaining the club when student leaders graduate.

9. The student leaders who organize those clubs and the clubs themselves are considered members of GSA Network. These students complete the registration of their GSA club, serve as the point of contact between the club and GSA Network, and represent their club in the GSA Network's Youth General Assembly. Student GSA members also nominate board members of the GSA Network under our bylaws. Our member student leaders are in grades ranging from sixth grade through undergraduate level.
10. GSA Network also facilitates a national coalition—the National Association of GSA Networks—of state-level organizations that support and work directly with GSA clubs and local TQ2S+ community centers. These state-level partner organizations are considered members of the National Association of GSA Networks. GSA Network previously partnered with OutYouth's Texas GSA Network project, but the project has been discontinued due to our Texas partner losing grant funding. Currently, GSA Network does not have a state-level coalition partner in Texas, but we are working to establish a new partnership within the next year.
11. GSA Network primarily connects with students who register their GSAs with GSA Network through its website. Each year, GSA Network holds a registration drive, which state-level partner organizations help to publicize. GSA Network also conducts outreach to student leaders at conferences and Pride events.
12. In the spring of 2025, there were twenty-two GSA clubs registered with GSA Network in Texas. GSA Network does not track the number of active members of each club, but they typically have an average of five members per club. I estimate that GSA Network's member GSA clubs in Texas represent approximately one hundred students.
13. The GSAs registered with GSA Network in Texas come from fourteen school districts, including in Austin, Brownsville, Dallas, El Paso, Fort Bend, Houston, Katy, and Plano ISDs, as well as two charter schools.

#### **GSA Network's Activities**

14. GSA Network provides support and resources to GSA clubs and students involved in the clubs in many ways, including guidance on how to run a GSA club, guidance for advisors of GSA clubs, resources for organizing days of action for racial and gender justice, providing information and guidance to students' parents on how to support their children, educational workshop guides, and toolkits for virtual organizing. Examples of these resources include guidance documents on how to create an inclusive GSA and select student leaders, a handbook for GSA advisors, and workshop guides about how to create educational justice campaigns. GSA Network also distributes a monthly newsletter, Stardial, to the GSA clubs in its network, which offers analysis of recent policies impacting TQ2S+ rights and racial justice, trainings that students can attend or conduct at their GSA club meetings, and opportunities for funding for GSA clubs. The GSA Network intends to keep sharing these resources and information with registered GSAs, faculty sponsors, and GSA members in Texas if not prevented from doing so by S.B. 12.

15. GSA Network organizes Youth General Assemblies twice a year: one during the fall semester and one in the spring semester. These are live or pre-recorded virtual events which GSA clubs can screen during their meetings, then submit responses to the videos after the fact. The Youth General Assemblies are the main way for GSA clubs to connect with other clubs around the country. These events are facilitated by student leader members and have included panels by lawyers explaining the impacts of new anti-transgender legislation around the country, political education and collective study, and calls to action on particular issues. GSA clubs are encouraged to respond to the program by hosting a teach-in on the topic covered at the General Assembly, or by continuing to teach and discuss the topic during their future meetings. In the future, GSA Network plans to invite student leaders to vote as representatives of their GSA clubs on issues to include in a national agenda of key priorities. Through the Youth General Assemblies, students build connections with other students and GSA clubs around the country, develop leadership skills from facilitating the activities and participating with their GSA clubs, and build knowledge about the political issues facing TQ2S+ young people around the country.
16. GSA Network administers the Youth Freedom Fund, which distributes small grants to GSA clubs. GSA clubs may propose a project and receive up to \$500 to fund the project, such as a field trip, screening a movie, or hosting a speaker at their club meeting. GSA Network has awarded two grants in 2023 to GSA clubs in Texas, although one GSA was unable to accept the grant due to financial limitations from the school.
17. GSA Network has also piloted and plans to continue organizing a fellowship program. GSA Network provides stipend-based training and helps place youth workers (selected by partner organizations) within state-level organizations. The fellows then assist with outreach to students to form or register GSA clubs, and support students organizing GSA clubs.

#### **Activities of GSA Clubs Affiliated with GSA Network**

18. GSAs are student-run organizations that unite TQ2S+ and allied youth to build community and organize around issues impacting them in their schools and communities. GSAs have evolved beyond their traditional role (formerly known as Gay-Straight Alliances) to serve as safe spaces for all TQ2S+ youth and allies in middle schools and high schools, and they have emerged as vehicles for deep social change related to racial, gender, and educational justice. GSAs support TQ2S+ and allied students in building confidence at school and in their communities, and in learning how to advocate for themselves, their identities, and their communities. This confidence, in many cases, brings students closer with their families, as students have the confidence to share their full selves with their family members and foster closer relationships. GSA clubs also prepare students for college and to enter the workforce by providing opportunities for project management experience, civic engagement and leadership development.
19. Some of the GSA clubs in GSA Network function primarily as gathering spaces for TQ2S+ and allied students to meet each other, share their experiences, and support each other as a community. Some students can feel alienated and alone, and GSA clubs provide an opportunity for students to see and communicate with others going through similar life experiences.

20. Some GSA clubs focus on mutual aid and support for the TQ2S+ community in their school and broader community by organizing fundraisers, giveaway drives, clothing swaps, and/or sharing mental health resources.
21. Other GSA clubs are more action- and education-oriented, engaging in campaigns to make changes in their schools, spreading awareness in their school community about TQ2S+ and racial justice issues, and/or participating in days of action around specific issues such as racial justice or immigrants' rights.
22. One major event that GSA Network encourages GSA clubs to participate in is the GSA Day for Racial Justice. GSA Network provides toolkits and facilitator-guided workshops about various racial justice topics for GSA clubs to participate in during their meetings. These topics have included the impact of racial justice effects on transgender and queer organizing; the leadership of Black, Indigenous, and people of color in queer student movements; and the importance of engaging in intersectional work (work that involves the intersections of multiple marginalized identities, such as race, sexual orientation or gender identity, disability, and/or socioeconomic status) led by people with intersecting identities.
23. Although GSA clubs are student-run, school faculty often play an important role in GSA clubs with many schools requiring a faculty sponsor for the club to exist. Faculty advisors encourage and support students in taking on projects, provide guidance about school regulations for specific activities, mediate conflicts that arise between club members or with other students or faculty, serve as liaisons between the GSA club members and the school administration, with the GSA Network, and students' families, and facilitate activities that require an adult (such as field trips). Many faculty advisors serve as the point of contact between GSA Network and the GSA clubs, often using their school email address and/or school mailing address to receive materials and resources from GSA Network. Faculty advisors also play an important role in facilitating leadership transition in GSA clubs when student leaders graduate. Many of the activities that GSA clubs organize or participate in would not be possible, either for practical reasons or due to school rules, without a school faculty advisor supporting the activities.

**S.B. 12's Impact on Student Members and GSA Clubs Registered with GSA Network**

24. If the part of S.B. 12 prohibiting GSAs is allowed to go into effect, the GSA Network's twenty-two registered GSA Clubs in Texas will likely have to disband, directly infringing the Clubs' and members' freedom of speech and expressive association. S.B. 12 explicitly prevents schools from allowing any student organization "based on sexual orientation or gender identity," which would likely include all twenty-two registered GSA clubs. The GSA Network has already confirmed that at least one of our registered member GSAs has been shut down at a high school in Plano ISD, and we expect to hear of more GSAs across Texas being prohibited due to S.B. 12.
25. S.B. 12's GSA Ban means that Texas students in public and charter schools, including GSA Network members, will be unable to join or form new GSA clubs at their schools. These clubs provide vital support to TQ2S+ and allied students, including providing spaces for students to support each other, express their identities, learn about other identities from other student members, and engage in advocacy for TQ2S+ rights. S.B. 12 would explicitly



harm the freedom of GSA club members to associate based on their shared identities and to speak about and express those identities with each other.

26. The infringement on students' freedom of speech and association is not an abstract harm. Our student leaders consistently tell us that for themselves and other members of GSA clubs, the GSA clubs provide a critical space for students to build community around their shared TQ2S+ identities and support each other in understanding their own identities. Students have told us that their GSA club is the only TQ2S+ focused space in their schools. Having a space like this not only helps students build confidence in themselves, but gives them the confidence to express and share that identity with others. By prohibiting these critical spaces for community support and learning, TQ2S+ students will be less able to build that confidence, and will feel less prepared to share their identities with the people around them, including their parents and families. Students have told us that lacking that confidence and community support often creates distance and isolation from their families and loved ones, because they are unable to share who they truly are. This lack of confidence and community support also manifests in the classroom; students have told us that when they don't have access to a GSA club, they are less likely to actively participate in class, and are more likely to skip classes or stay home from school altogether. Students without access to a GSA club often report facing mental health struggles such as anxiety and depression, and also report that those struggles are alleviated when they are able to join a GSA club. GLSEN's research confirms that students who experienced victimization at school were almost three times more likely to have skipped school because they felt unsafe or uncomfortable and demonstrated lower levels of academic achievement including lower GPAs. The 2021 National School Climate Survey found that 15.6% of LGBTQI+ students were prevented from writing or doing school projects about LGBTQI+ topics for class.<sup>3</sup> Students without access to a GSA club often report facing mental health struggles such as anxiety and depression, and also report that those struggles are alleviated when they are able to join a GSA club. This finding is supported by comprehensive research demonstrating that compared to LGBTQI+ students who have not experienced discrimination at school, censorship and other experiences of anti-LGBTQI+ discrimination at school are associated with poorer education and wellbeing outcomes, including lower GPAs, lower self-esteem, and higher levels of depression and suicidality.

Material harms to TQ2S+ students caused by censorship and anti-LGBTQ+ discrimination at school include:

- Increased absenteeism: Students are more likely to skip classes or stay home from school altogether when they lack supportive spaces and inclusive learning environments.

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<sup>3</sup> Bonnie Washik Ph.D., et al., *Inclusive Learning: A Synthesis of 20+ years of Research on the Education and Wellbeing Impacts of Inclusive Curriculum, Instruction, and School Books*, GLSEN (2024), [https://www.glsen.org/sites/default/files/2024-06/Inclusive%20Learning%20Research%20Brief\\_0.pdf](https://www.glsen.org/sites/default/files/2024-06/Inclusive%20Learning%20Research%20Brief_0.pdf).

- Academic decline: Lower GPAs and reduced academic achievement due to victimization and lack of supportive school climate.
- Mental health deterioration: Higher levels of depression, anxiety, and suicidality among TQ2S+ students and students from LGBTQ families.
- Family isolation and shame: Students become less able to share their authentic selves and family structures with peers and educators, creating internal conflict and shame about their families.
- Restricted educational access: Prevention from completing school projects on relevant topics, limiting academic expression and learning for both TQ2S+ students and students with LGBTQ family members.
- Hostile school climate: Increased harassment and bullying, reduced peer acceptance, and diminished sense of belonging at school for all students connected to LGBTQ identities or families.
- Forced compartmentalization: Students must maintain artificial separation between their home and school identities, preventing authentic participation in classroom discussions, assignments, and social interactions.

SB12 would create a school environment where any student connected to LGBTQ identities—whether through their own identity or their family relationships—cannot participate fully and authentically in their education.

27. Other provisions of S.B. 12 would also harm the GSA clubs and their members. The law limits school faculty's ability to assist GSA Network's existing clubs and members by preventing any school employee or third party from engaging in any "diversity, equity, and inclusion" duties, including by "developing or implementing policies, procedures, trainings, activities, or programs that reference race, color, ethnicity, gender identity, or sexual orientation." These broad provisions, reaching far beyond the classroom, touch on so many potential activities for school faculty that it is unclear what could safely comply with them. Even if GSA Network's existing clubs and members try to change the name of their organizations or rebrand to adhere to the law, the core programs and activities that these clubs engage in still reference race, color, ethnicity, gender identity, and sexual orientation.
28. S.B. 12's prohibition of any staff member or third party from "implementing" nearly all activities undertaken by GSA clubs harms these clubs and members, since they need faculty support or sponsorship to hold events at school or take field trips off campus. The faculty sponsors would also potentially be prohibited from serving as liaisons between GSA clubs and GSA Network, since nearly all of GSA Network's resources sent to GSAs through GSA club sponsors reference race, color, ethnicity, gender identity, and/or sexual orientation. Because the presence and active participation of a school faculty member is often required for nearly any activity involving students who are members of the GSA Network, the ban on faculty participation in what the Texas Legislature considers to be "diversity, equity, and inclusion" activities would likely become a ban on students engaging in GSA club activities altogether.



29. S.B. 12 also harms GSA clubs and their members by preventing any school employee or third party from providing “instruction, guidance, activities, or programming regarding sexual orientation or gender identity to students.” Like other student organizations, GSA clubs often invite guest speakers to attend their meetings or events and discuss their own sexual orientation or gender identity. Faculty advisors also often share information with students about these topics and help sponsor and support student-run events. Even GSA Network’s own materials and resources would be prohibited at Texas schools under this provision, since the GSA Network is a “third party” that provides instruction, guidance, activities, and programming on these topics. It is unclear where students would be able to safely receive any guidance or instruction about their own identities.
30. Prohibiting educators and third parties from providing any instruction, guidance, activities, or programming regarding sexual orientation or gender identity fundamentally harms GSA clubs and their members by impairing their ability to continue operating. Furthermore, even if GSA clubs choose to move their meetings off school property due to the GSA ban, the Don’t Say LGBTQ+ ban is not limited to school employees’ activities at school, and it would prevent school employees from participating in GSA club meetings regardless of where or when they take place. It limits all communication between faculty and students, even in the faculties personal time and off of school property. This infringes not only club advisors’ freedom to speak to GSA clubs, but also the GSA club members’ right to receive information.
31. S.B. 12’s Social Transition Ban also harms GSA clubs and their members, who frequently discuss issues relating to gender identity and social transitioning, including with their club advisor. If S.B. 12 is enforced, the prohibition on school faculty sharing information about social transition inherently chills and suppresses these discussions and deprives GSA clubs and their members of any information that they want to learn from school employees. Like the Don’t Say LGBTQ+ Ban, this provision prohibits school employees from sharing information about social transition even if students move their GSA club meetings outside of schools to comply with the law, leaving students without an avenue to receive information about social transition from school employees like their club advisors. It also makes students less likely to engage in discussions about social transitioning if they risk getting their advisor disciplined for simply being in the room or trying to help supervise a student-run meeting. S.B. 12 also imposes a stigma on social transitioning that makes GSA clubs’ transgender or non-binary members feel like discussions surrounding their identities are shameful or wrong.
32. All four of these sections of S.B. 12 fundamentally impair the activities, speech, and freedom of association of GSA Network’s clubs and members. Even if this law is later amended or repealed, even permitting these prohibitions to take effect for months or years would irreparably harm GSA clubs, which rely heavily on information and knowledge passed down year after year by students and faculty sponsors to continue to operate.
33. The enforcement of S.B. 12 will also exact a heavy toll on the mental, emotional, social, and spiritual wellbeing of the GSA Network’s members, especially members of color, and clubs. The students in our network report feeling happier and healthier when there are GSAs at their schools, and they find that the presence of GSAs helps to mitigate bullying, discrimination, and harassment faced by TQ2S+ students. We hear this anecdotally from

our members and it is also confirmed by research on the topic.<sup>4</sup> With GSAs being banned and discussions about race, sexual orientation, gender identity, and social transitioning being driven into the shadows, GSA members will find their identities marginalized and shunned in schools and will face higher rates of bullying and discrimination. The harm and stigma imposed by this law are especially pernicious for transgender, non-binary, intersex, and two-spirit youth, who already face disproportionately high rates of bullying and discrimination. If state-sanctioned discrimination against these students' identities is permitted, these students will face more hate and discrimination in their day-to-day lives.

#### **S.B. 12's Impact on GSA Network**

34. In addition to the impacts described above on GSA clubs and their members, GSA Network itself will also be harmed if these provisions of S.B. 12 go into effect. GSA Network's mission is to support students to form GSA clubs and advocate, organize, and mobilize an intersectional movement for safer schools and healthier communities. This requires students to be able to gather, discuss the issues that are important to them, and organize events and activities around those issues. If students are unable to form GSA clubs or engage in activities with faculty that even reference race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or gender identity, GSA Network is impeded from achieving its mission.
35. GSA Network's own freedom of speech will also be curtailed by S.B. 12 because the Network will be prohibited from sharing resources and information with audiences in Texas. GSA Network currently distributes information directly to GSA clubs through their student leaders and faculty advisors. GSA Network often emails teachers and students through their school-affiliated e-mail addresses and sometimes sends physical mail with information and resources directly to school campuses. S.B. 12 censors and prohibits this GSA Network speech, including by prohibiting all third parties from providing any "instruction, guidance, activities, or programming regarding sexual orientation or gender identity to students."
36. Even if some GSA clubs and their members try to organize outside of school to continue supporting each other and to discuss topics prohibited by S.B. 12, GSA Network will have to expend more resources to speak with and connect with these groups. GSA Network relies on schools and school employees as sources of continuity for student-run clubs and often communicates with students through school-affiliated e-mail and schools' mailing addresses. Forcing GSA clubs and their members outside of public and charter schools would substantially impair the GSA Network's freedom of speech and mission.
37. Allowing S.B. 12's GSA Ban to be lawfully enforced would also permanently harm the GSA Network's mission and reputation. Because Texas legislators invoked the GSA

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<sup>4</sup> V. Pauln Potiet, et al., *Greater Engagement in Gender-Sexuality Alliances and GSA Characteristics Predict Youth Empowerment and Reduced Mental Health Concerns*, (Jun. 2019) <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC7246142/>; Laura Baams, "Gay-Straight Alliances, School Functioning, and Mental Health: Associations for Students of Color and LGBTQ Students," <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/epub/10.1177/0044118X20951045>

Network when promulgating this law and while calling GSAs “sex clubs,” we feel maligned and targeted by this law and worry about it spreading to other states if the constitutional rights of the GSA Network and our members are not vindicated through this lawsuit.

**GSA Network’s Diversion of Resources Due to S.B. 12**

38. GSA Network has also had to reallocate considerable time and resources from its regular operations in order to support students and GSA clubs in preparing for the impacts of S.B. 12. The GSA Network has been forced to try to keep supporting GSAs, club sponsors, and student members while complying with the requirements of S.B. 12, a project that is made even more difficult because of the law’s breadth of scope and lack of specificity. The GSA Network is spending time and resources traveling to Texas to meet with partners about how to navigate this law’s restrictions, which would not be needed if S.B. 12 had not been passed. Facilitating these meetings has cost GSA Network approximately \$3,000, which would have been used for other areas of GSA Network’s work around the country.
39. GSA Network has also begun planning additional trips to Texas to support the organizing that GSA clubs are engaging in, to meet with student GSA club leaders off-campus to strategize which activities they can still legally engage in, and to determine further resources or other support the clubs may require because of S.B. 12. GSA Network would not be planning these additional visits to Texas if S.B. 12 had not passed. These visits are expected to cost GSA Network approximately \$5,000, which would have been used to fund other projects in GSA Network’s work around the country.
40. GSA Network anticipates that, because GSA clubs will be banned from schools, GSA clubs will likely require additional resources to secure meeting locations outside of school, provide transportation for GSA club members to those offsite locations, and establish new means of coordinating GSA club meetings, information, and membership outside of the structure provided for in-school clubs. Given this anticipated need for additional resources, GSA Network opened early applications for Texas applicants—requiring additional staff time—to the Youth Freedom Fund. GSA Network would not have opened these applications early, and therefore would not have needed to expend the additional staff time, if S.B. 12 had not been passed. GSA Network cannot yet calculate the total cost of these additional resources but anticipates that they will exceed between approximately \$10,000 and \$13,000, which GSA Network would not have had to spend, and which could have been used to fund other GSA Network work nationally, had S.B. 12 not been passed.
41. The time and resources that GSA Network will have to spend supporting these students cannot change the fact that S.B. 12 bans GSAs and suppresses the free and open discussion of issues relating to race, gender identity, and sexual orientation in Texas schools. Even if the GSA Network had unlimited resources to counter this law’s impact, which it does not, S.B. 12’s infringement on the constitutional rights of GSA Network and its members—and the concrete harms the law imposes—are impermeable and devastating.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct. Executed on  
08/27/2025.

  
Maya LaFlamme Washington (Aug 27, 2025 7:13:42 LPT)

Maya LaFlamme Washington