

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The logo features the name "Aisha Moe" in a large, white, serif font, centered on a solid blue rectangular background. Above and below the name are two horizontal white lines, resembling an equals sign. Below the name, the words "For State Senate" are written in a smaller, white, sans-serif font.

= Aisha Moe =
For State Senate

Achieving Equality for the LGBTQ+ Community

MADISON, WI, March 31 – In honor of the transgender day of visibility, , Aisha Moe, candidate for State Senate in District 26, released the following plan to ensure LGBTQ+ equality:

On June 28th, 1969, there was a riot in Greenwich Village in Manhattan. In a small pub named the Stonewall Inn, a group of patrons who were tired of continued harassment by the New York police took a stand and fought back. Decades of tensions came to a head as activists like Marsha P. Johnson and Gloria Rivia lead the charge against a brutally oppressive police department in a series of riots and demonstrations that would inspired LGBTQ+ folks across the world. The Queer Liberation movement may not have began in 1969, but it certainly didn't end then. Following Stonewall, millions of activists took to the streets and demanded dignity. Out from the ashes of Stonewall sprung a surge in membership for groups like the Matachine Society and the Gay Liberation Front, and the energy that had fueled the riots sparked a revolution.

Activists took to the streets across the US and demanded recognition. They picketed, they marched, they attended town halls, and they made themselves undeniable, but most importantly, they showed others that they weren't alone. It is in honor of those activists that came before us that we announce our plan for LGBTQ+ liberation in the state of Wisconsin, because as Marsha P Johnson once said, "You never completely have your rights, one person, until you all have your rights."

Our plan is as follows:

Ending Conversion Therapy

Someone's sexuality and gender identity isn't something you can just change. You can't shame it away, you can't pray it away, and you certainly can't traumatize it away. It has been proven time and time again that all forms of conversion therapy are completely ineffective and can only hurt the people it's allegedly trying to help. Many cities and municipalities, including Madison, have already outlawed conversion therapy, but a statewide ban has yet to be passed. If elected, I pledge to work with all of the amazing legislators, like Senator Tim Carpenter, who

have been fighting to ban this incredibly harmful practice. It's time for Wisconsin to join the twenty states that have already passed this ban and consign conversion therapy to the dustbin of history with other pseudoscientific practices like lobotomies and bloodletting.

Healthcare that works for the LGBTQ+ community

Any discussion of Medicare for All would be incomplete without talking about how the LGBTQ+ community would be affected. According to Human Rights Watch, many people in the LGBTQ+ community still face barriers when it comes to receiving healthcare. Whether it's physicians refusing to see LGBTQ+ patients, healthcare providers refusing coverage for transition related expenses or a complete lack of healthcare, it's clear that we still have a long way to go in achieving equality in healthcare.

We need to create a system that guarantees healthcare and treatment to everyone, regardless of identity, because there is no room for discrimination or gatekeeping when it comes to saving lives. We need to be able to ensure not only that everyone in the LGBTQ+ community has the opportunity to see the doctor but also to seek whatever medical care that they require. More specifically, we need to guarantee that transgender and gender-nonconforming individuals have access to transition-related healthcare, which we can achieve by moving to a Badgercare for All system.

And when we talk about healthcare, we're talking about all kinds of healthcare, including mental healthcare. According to the Human Rights Campaign, 28% of LGBTQ+ youth, including 40% of transgender youth, have experienced severe symptoms of depression in the last 30 days. This is affected by many factors, including presence of supportive friends and family, general stigmas, and access to healthcare. While we work to fight back against the root causes of depression and substance abuse in the LGBTQ+ community, we can provide access to mental healthcare in order to fight the symptoms.

Fighting discrimination

While Wisconsin has passed some protections against discrimination, it is generally not expansive enough. Many of these protections, including hate crime and anti-bullying legislation, only prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation and not gender identity. Other protections that protect LGBTQ+ individuals from discrimination in employment and housing are currently being fought over in our courts.

A patchwork series of half-measures is not enough to protect the LGBTQ+ community. Too many people are falling through the gaps. We need a comprehensive bill that outlaws all kinds of discrimination based on both sexual orientation and gender identity in all areas, including housing and employment.

Guaranteed housing

While on the topic of housing discrimination, we should talk about how homelessness affects the LGBTQ+ community. According to the Williams Institute, 40% of the homeless youth population identifies as LGBT. Being kicked out of your house by your family is traumatic enough on its own, you shouldn't have to worry about finding shelter afterwards. According to HUD, Wisconsin's homeless population has nearly reached 5,000. Recent events have shown us how vital having housing is in the time of a crisis, so the necessity of a housing guarantee has become clearer than ever, so we must work to provide public housing for all of our homeless populations.

End the LGBTQ+ panic defense

In some states, including Wisconsin, the LGBTQ+ panic defense makes it legal to assault or even kill people following the disclosure or discovery of their sexual orientation and/or gender identity. Not only is this law arcane and immoral, it contributes to a culture that believes that LGBTQ+ lives are worth less and creates violence that disproportionately affects transgender women, especially trans women of color. If elected, I will be proud to join in the efforts led by legislators like Greta Neubauer in outlawing this evil defense.

Enshrining adoption/parenthood rights

If two parents love their child, it doesn't matter what gender the parents are. It's time for the laws to reflect that. While there are currently a number of battles being fought in the courts over adoption/parenthood rights, there are things we can do right now in Wisconsin to ensure that same sex parents have the same rights as opposite sex parents. One of the first things we can do is to ensure that same-sex partners have the ability to adopt their partner's child just as straight step-parents can. We can also make it illegal to discriminate against same-sex parents on the grounds of "religious liberty" in the adoption process.

Making the legal transition process less complicated

Transitioning is a long, incredibly personal journey that involves countless personal decisions. It shouldn't be the government's job to tell you how to transition or to put up unnecessary road blocks. The current process of changing your name, pronouns, important legal documents, voter registration, and more is incredibly and unnecessarily complex, involving many court dates, countless legal forms, publishing your name change in a local newspaper for three weeks, and a bunch of other hoops to jump through. I propose that we make it possible to make all of these changes in one, simplified legal process. Additionally, we should remove the gender from all documents that don't actually require them. The process of transitioning physically, socially, and/or medically is complicated enough on its own. The government shouldn't make it more complicated.