



News Release:

From: One Human Family of the QCA

Event: 'Iowa is Better Than This' statewide event, Feb. 16

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## **'Iowa is Better Than This' statewide event Feb. 16 laments Iowa's discriminatory legislation**

During the past year, the Iowa Legislature proposed and even codified into law bills that attempt to normalize discrimination, reduce voting access and hurt many citizens of this state. Legislators are proposing more of the same during this year's session of the General Assembly.

To call out these efforts and stand up for the rights of all Iowa citizens, particularly the most vulnerable, One Human Family of the QCA, along with the American Association of University Women (AAUW) of Iowa, the Interfaith Alliance of Iowa & Action Fund and Progress Iowa, is sponsoring a **free** statewide "Iowa is Better Than This" event, a lament of discriminatory legislation, at 5 p.m. Feb. 16.

The hybrid event will include live and online participation from those at different sites around the state who will highlight how the discriminatory actions of the Iowa Legislature, many of which were signed into law by the governor, will negatively impact state residents.

Issues of concern addressed during the event will include, but not be limited to:

- LGBTQ+ issues
- Voting rights
- Gun accessibility
- Housing discrimination
- Educational curriculum
- The right to peaceful protest
- Treatment of immigrants

"The actions taken by the Iowa Legislature and then signed into law by the governor do not represent what so many of us in the state believe in or want in our communities," says Rabbi Henry Karp, co-founder of One Human Family QCA. "It is time to stand up and say enough is enough. Iowa is a beautiful

and culturally diverse state. We need laws that honor all who live in our state. What the Iowa Legislature has proposed and codified into law does not honor or reflect what Iowa stands for. It tears at the very fabric of the heart of what is good about our state.”

According to Rev. Richard Hendricks, co-founder of One Human Family QCA, the actions taken by the Iowa Legislature are counter to what the state has always stood for. “‘Iowa Nice’ is a term long associated with those who live in the state. It *should* mean that we care about each and every Iowan. We honored our diversity by being the third state in the nation to legalize same-sex marriage. Now we have become known for our anti-LGBTQ+ legislation, particularly taking aim at transgender youth. There are so many more issues, with legislators now calling to criminally prosecute teachers for material that certain legislators deem inappropriate. Teachers are there to help our young citizens think critically and be the best they can be, no matter their race, religion or sexual orientation. Our beloved ‘Iowa Nice,’ where we respect all of our citizens and honor their dignity, seems to have flown out the window.”

But it is not just gender equity, notes Dale Blesz, education professor at St. Ambrose University, Davenport, and author of the lament document that will be read during the hybrid event. “It is all aspects of what we hold dear in our state — from voting rights to the right to peacefully protest and the welcoming of immigrants, an act that was wonderfully modeled by former Gov. Robert Ray. Legislators are creating an ‘us and them’ atmosphere that isn’t who we are. That is why we are coming together to voice our lament of legislators’ actions. We can’t just sit by and let this happen,” he says.

Take part in this **free** event by registering today at [OneHumanFamilyQCA.org](https://OneHumanFamilyQCA.org).

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One Human Family is a community-based organization, including, but not limited to, faith leaders, civic leaders, educators and proud Iowa-Illinois Quad-Citians who care deeply about addressing issues of discrimination, hatred and injustice in our communities. Our mission is to welcome and protect the life, dignity and human rights of all people in all places in our communities.