

# Fresh Ideas

Born and raised in North Dallas by a single mom who was a Dallas public school teacher, Colin Allred was an All-Star athlete at Hillcrest High school and earned a full-ride football scholarship to Baylor University. Diploma in hand and prepared to attend law school, Colin deferred his acceptance to play in the NFL. He was a linebacker for five seasons before sustaining a career-ending injury that opened the door him to fulfill his other dream—becoming a civil rights attorney. After serving in President Obama’s administration, Colin moved home to Dallas and is running for Congress to represent the district he grew up in. Colin will bring North Texas values, fresh ideas and new leadership to Washington. He’ll work to lower healthcare costs, protect Medicare and Social Security, and expand job training programs so everyone has a chance at the American Dream.

## COLIN ALLRED



FOR CONGRESS





Our country is facing real challenges, and we need leaders who will come together to solve them. Those challenges impact everyday people, right here in our North Texas community. They impact young families like mine, who wonder whether they'll be able to send their kids to college and give them a shot at the American dream. They impact small business owners, who have worked hard, saved their pennies, and now are looking to invest back into the community. And they impact seniors who have worked their whole lives and paid into Medicare and Social Security, but still have to worry about whether they'll be able to retire with dignity.

But Washington has stopped listening to the voices of everyday people like the families, small business owners, and seniors that make up our community. Instead, Washington has become beholden to big special interests that pour money into campaigns and drown out the voices of everyday people who just want government to work again. And in the 20-plus years that Pete Sessions has been in Washington, it's only gotten worse.

That's why I'm running—to provide a real voice for North Texans in Congress. Government isn't the solution to everything, but it shouldn't be the problem either. We need new leadership with fresh ideas and the ability and willingness to cut across tired partisan lines, build new common ground, and find solutions that make people's lives better. But Washington is plagued by gridlock, adherence to the status quo, and divisive partisanship. It is badly in need of new leaders and fresh ideas, and if I have the opportunity to serve our community in Congress, these are some of the policies I would pursue.





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## Making Healthcare Affordable

Access to healthcare is a fundamental right—one that too many of our fellow North Texans have been denied for too long. According to the Census Bureau, nearly 1 in 5 Dallas County residents—over 500,000 people—lack coverage, and Texas has the highest uninsured rate in the nation. Many North Texans who do have insurance still must contend with high premiums, high deductibles, high drug prices, and huge out-of-pocket costs.

Despite the progress we have made under the ACA, for millions of Texans access to healthcare is still out of reach. And Pete Sessions and Donald Trump have repeatedly and intentionally worked to sabotage the ACA, worsening out-of-control healthcare costs. As a direct result of their actions, estimates show that premiums in 2019 will increase by almost \$3,500 for a North Texan family of four, nearly \$3,800 for a North Texan couple over the age of 55, and over \$1,000 for an individual North Texan 40-year-old. We can, and must, do better in this country. Healthcare isn't a luxury item you can go without—it's a matter of life and death. We must address the current healthcare crisis in Texas by expanding coverage through competition and lower costs and tackling the cost of prescription drugs so that no North Texan has to ration their medications.

In Congress, I will work to:

**Protect and expand our healthcare markets:** The ACA was an enormous step forward in expanding access to healthcare and ending abusive practices by insurance companies. No longer can insurers deny coverage because of a pre-existing condition or impose an annual or lifetime cap, and parents can now keep their children on their health insurance plans until they're 26. Pete Sessions voted to repeal the ACA and go back to the days when insurance companies could deny coverage to the estimated 324,300 North Texans who have a preexisting condition. I will support efforts to expand coverage and protections under the ACA, and oppose attempts to undo these important achievements, including President Trump and Pete Sessions's efforts to sabotage it.





**Lower the cost of prescription drugs by allowing Medicare to negotiate directly with pharmaceutical companies:** Current federal law prohibits Medicare from directly negotiating drug prices. This policy has been good for giant pharmaceutical companies, but it has not served the American people. Medicare is the largest buyer in the prescription drug market, accounting for nearly one third of all pharmaceutical buying. We should allow Medicare to negotiate drug prices directly, which would leverage its enormous purchasing power and lower the costs of prescription drugs for all Americans.

**Create an option to buy into Medicare:** In order to expand coverage and lower costs, we must introduce more competition into the healthcare market by offering every American an option to buy into Medicare. Medicare's low overhead costs and established provider networks can form the basis for an affordable, quality alternative that will compete with private insurers, driving down costs for everyone. Under this plan, existing sources of health insurance, including employer-provided insurance, will not be disturbed, and North Texans will be able to choose whether they want to keep their current insurance or buy into Medicare. This approach could also expand upon the services that Medicare already provides by covering areas that Medicare currently does not, such as pediatrics and maternity care.

**Protect and expand Medicaid:** Medicaid provides critical healthcare to children, the disabled, and the elderly. In 2016 alone, Texas received over \$23 billion in federal Medicaid funding for these at-risk populations. This funding, which Pete Sessions voted to cut, is a lifeline for many Texas families that I will work to protect in Congress. I will also seek to expand Medicaid, which could result in 2.5 million more Texans with healthcare coverage.



## Education & Public Schools

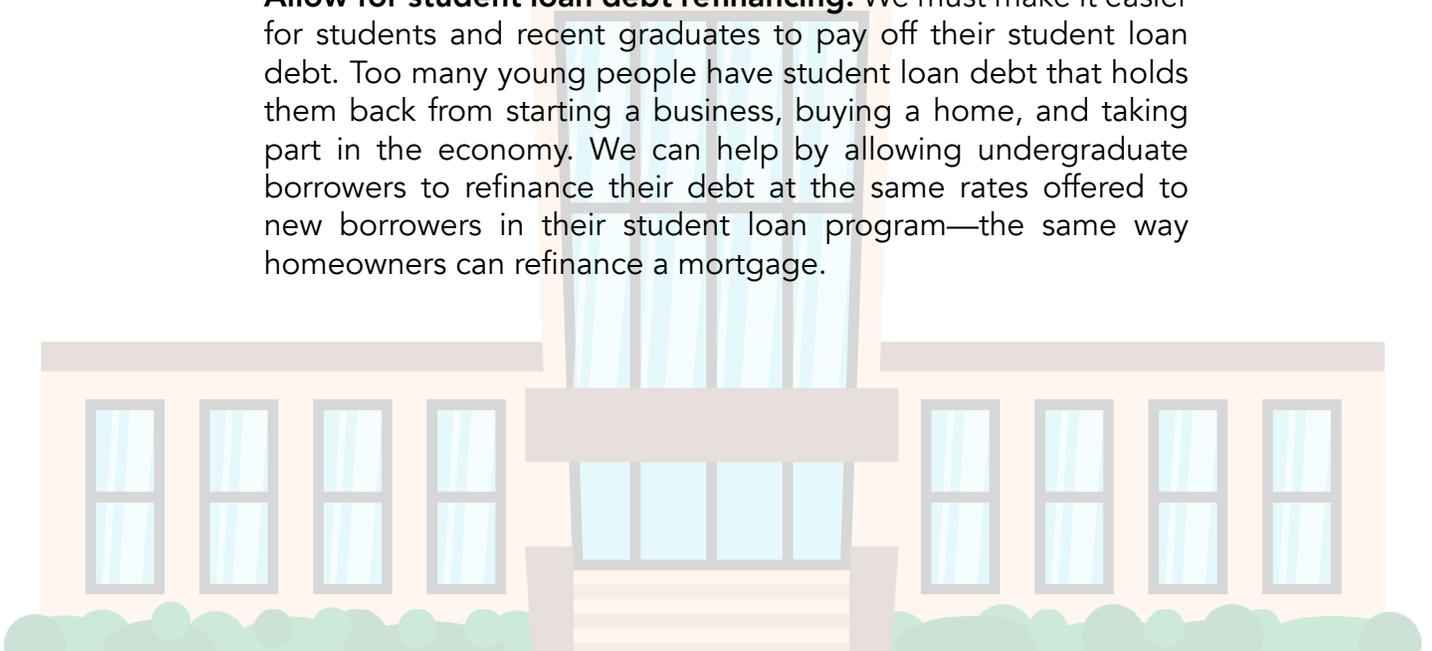
I had the chance to follow my NFL career with a career as a civil rights lawyer because of the public education I got in the Dallas Independent School District. For so many other kids like me, a quality education is the first essential building block to ensuring equal opportunity in our country. Every child has the fundamental right to a quality education—regardless of where they grow up, whether their family is rich or poor, or the color of their skin. Education liberates the mind and opens the door to a better life. But today, we are not doing enough to make sure every child has access to the education they deserve.

That is why in Congress I will not only fight efforts to cut back on public education, I will work to expand investment in our kids through education—so that every child in America has a shot at the American Dream.

In Congress, I will work to:

**Bolster vocational and apprenticeship programs, and work toward debt-free college:** We need to prepare our kids for the jobs of the 21st Century. In our ever-shrinking world that means they need to have access to the skills training they need to be able to compete in the global economy. We can do that by providing every student with an opportunity to learn computer science and coding, reintroducing vocational training into our high schools, and making debt-free college a reality for families earning less than \$125,000.

**Allow for student loan debt refinancing:** We must make it easier for students and recent graduates to pay off their student loan debt. Too many young people have student loan debt that holds them back from starting a business, buying a home, and taking part in the economy. We can help by allowing undergraduate borrowers to refinance their debt at the same rates offered to new borrowers in their student loan program—the same way homeowners can refinance a mortgage.





**Provide universal Pre-K:** Every American child should be able to attend pre-K. Investment in early childhood education is one of the best investments we can make as a country. Research shows that access to early learning is critical for the development of a child over their lifetime. Access to pre-K is also important for families looking for affordable, safe childcare. Today, however, just half of 3- and 4-year-olds in America are enrolled in pre-K. Together, we can make sure every child gets the start they deserve.

**Support our teachers:** We need to recruit, train, and retain the best teachers in the world. The most important factor in a child's development in school is the quality of their teacher. Teachers are responsible for our most valuable resource, our kids, and we as a nation must do more to support them. That means steering our best and brightest into teaching by offering incentives like scholarships and loan forgiveness, paying them a competitive salary once they are hired, and supporting them throughout their career.

**Rebuild the decaying infrastructure of our public school system:** Our children deserve better than to go to school in buildings that are falling apart around them. We must provide our schools with the resources they need to bring their buildings into the 21st century, provide up-to-date textbooks to all kids, ensure Internet access in every classroom, and harness the new generation of digital technology to bring the world into our classrooms.

**Close the education achievement gap:** To ensure we continue to move forward as a nation we must close the education achievement gap for lower income students, students of color, students with disabilities, and students for whom English is not their first language. Too many of our kids are falling through the cracks in schools that are more segregated now than they were 50 years ago. To address these issues we need to identify these underserved populations and direct resources to help them, so that every child has a chance to succeed.



## Restoring Our Democracy

The most powerful office in our country has always been, and must continue to be, that of the citizen. Today, however, the corrupt influence of money in our democracy, along with efforts to suppress voting, are drowning out the voices of the American people and destroying faith in our government. When a few individuals and giant corporations can spend hundreds of millions of dollars influencing our elections and pushing their personal agendas, they overpower the interests of everyday people. Everyday people are further silenced when they are stripped of their most fundamental right—the right to vote. Without it, we are powerless to exercise any other right our Constitution guarantees. This issue is personal to me: I am a voting rights attorney who has seen the negative impact of voter suppression firsthand. These practices must end. The voices of North Texans must be heard, and our government must return to working for the people that elect them—not the powerful special interests that fund their campaigns.

In Congress, I will work to:

**Restore the Voting Rights Act:** One of my first priorities in Congress will be to restore the Voting Rights Act. The Supreme Court's decision striking down the heart of the Voting Rights Act triggered a wave of new voter suppression laws that have had a clear impact on voter turnout. I will work to pass legislation reinstating and modernizing the Voting Rights Act.

**Make Election Day a national holiday and set a national standard for early voting:** We should honor and respect this fundamental act of citizenship by declaring Election Day a national holiday and setting a national standard of at least 20 days of early voting before a federal election.

**Refuse corporate PAC money:** I have pledged not to accept any corporate PAC money. In Congress, I will be a voice for North Texans, not donors or corporate special interests. Unlike my opponent, who has taken hundreds of thousands of dollars from corporations, I pledge to represent North Texan families.



**Overtun Citizens United:** I will support legislative efforts, including a constitutional amendment, to overturn Citizens United. This Supreme Court ruling has been used to corrupt our politics with a flood of money from corporations and special interests. In order to reverse the undue influence of money in politics, we must put power back into the hands of the people.

**Pass the Disclose Act:** The Disclose Act has been introduced several times in Congress since 2010. The Act is a response to Citizens United opening the floodgates to special interest money in our elections and would ban corporations with more than 20% foreign ownership from contributing to campaigns, while increasing transparency for large organizations making political ads.

**Enact automatic voter registration at the age of 18:** Every American should be automatically registered to vote when they turn 18.

**Restore voting rights for the formerly incarcerated:** 4.7 million formerly incarcerated Americans have been stripped of the right to vote by discriminatory laws across the country. This must end. In Congress, I will support efforts like the Democracy Restoration Act to restore voting rights in federal elections to those who have paid their debts to society.

**Eliminate partisan gerrymandering:** Voters should pick their representatives—not the other way around. In Congress, I will continue to focus on this issue and encourage Texas, and all other states, to adopt non-partisan redistricting.

**Eliminate unreasonable and discriminatory voter ID laws:** Under the pretext of fighting nonexistent, in-person “voter fraud,” these laws disenfranchise the most vulnerable voters. Congress should fight these efforts to restrict the vote by eliminating discriminatory voter ID laws.



## Economic Growth and Security

Every generation of Americans must rise to the task of protecting and passing on our greatest legacy: the American Dream, the idea that our children will have a better life than we did and that we can retire with dignity.

These uniquely American ideals have spread across the world, but here at home, the path into the middle class is narrowing and the American Dream is disappearing for too many. I have lived my version of the American Dream here in North Texas and am committed to restoring this fundamental promise for future generations by fighting for good paying jobs and an economy that works for everyone.

In Congress, I will work to:

**Protect Medicare and Social Security:** Medicare and Social Security are promises we've made to our seniors that should be honored. They are earned benefits that our senior citizens count on after they have worked to pay into these programs throughout their lives. I'll always fight to protect Medicare and Social Security because North Texans should be able to retire with dignity.

**Invest in job training programs for the 21st Century:** A shrinking world and increasing automation have dramatically changed the workforce needs of the modern American economy, but our workforce development is stuck in the past. Here in North Texas, we have a shortage of skilled labor, which is holding back our economy and raising costs for businesses and consumers. We can provide our businesses with the skilled workforce they need and create good paying jobs by investing in vocational training in our high schools and community colleges, creating and promoting apprenticeship programs, and finally addressing the cost of higher education.

**Ensure equal pay for equal work:** It is outrageous and unacceptable that women still make far less than their male counterparts for comparable work—and the pay gap is even wider for women of color. In Congress, I will support the Paycheck Fairness Act, which would make it easier for employees to uncover and seek redress for unequal pay, and bolster the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's investigative resources to root out pay discrimination.



**Rebuild our crumbling infrastructure:** Every year 100,000 people move to North Texas, bringing dynamism but also straining our already aging infrastructure. We need a new national commitment to rebuilding and updating our infrastructure here in North Texas, and across the country in order to create millions of jobs and provide the foundation for our businesses and workers to thrive.

**Empower our small businesses:** Small businesses are the drivers of new jobs and innovation, and are the cornerstones of our communities. We must make North Texas the best place in the country to start and grow a small business by cutting red tape holding back business creation, expanding access to capital and early investment, and offering tax breaks and incentives for small businesses instead of huge handouts for the largest corporations.

**Raise the minimum wage:** We not only need more jobs—we need better paying jobs. Raising the minimum wage puts more spending power in the hands of workers, improving the economy and reducing inequality. I will fight to raise the minimum wage, in graduated steps, and index it to inflation—because if someone works a full-time job in this country they should be able to take care of their family.

**Enact paid family leave and expand childcare programs:** You shouldn't have to choose between having a family and having a career. Paid family leave would allow you to take time off when you have or adopt a new child, when you or a family member gets sick, or when a member of your family is deployed in the military—and then return to work afterward. Making child care affordable for working families would enable more working parents to continue to work full-time.



## Fixing our Immigration System

Our current immigration system is broken. Washington politicians have failed to act for too long—preferring to play politics that make the problems we face worse, rather than fixing our broken immigration system. The time has come for a new generation of leadership to find solutions to these problems. I believe in, and will work towards, a bipartisan solution that keeps our communities safe while building ground for compromise, so that we can finally fix our broken immigration system.

In Congress, I will work to:

**Keep our borders and communities secure:** I will work to ensure that our law enforcement is equipped with the training and tools they need to keep our communities safe.

**Protect DREAMers:** I will fight to pass a clean DREAM Act that will ensure that those brought to the United States as children can find a permanent home and citizenship in our country.

**Provide a pathway to earned citizenship:** Those who are obeying the law, working hard, and contributing to our economy should have a pathway to earned citizenship.

**Ensure due process of law:** All people seeking entry into the United States must be guaranteed due process of law, and families should never be separated at the border.

**Hold employers accountable:** Employers who knowingly hire and exploit undocumented workers should be held accountable for their actions.

## Common Sense Gun Violence Solutions

I grew up in Texas, and I've always respected guns and the protection afforded to individual liberty by the 2nd Amendment. I'm also about to become a father and find the idea that my child will not be safe at school unacceptable. We must reject the idea that random, regular church and school shootings are a part of American life and that our elected officials are powerless to stop them. We can, and must, do more. In Congress, I will stand up for the rights of responsible gun owners and support common sense approaches to reducing gun violence such as criminal background checks on all gun sales, keeping guns out of the hands of violent criminals, domestic abusers, and those that are a danger to themselves or others.



In Congress, I will work to:

**Require criminal background checks on every gun sale:** Background checks protect the rights of responsible gun owners and save lives. Loopholes in our current laws allow felons, domestic abusers, and the severely mentally ill to avoid background checks when buying guns through unlicensed sellers, often online, who are not required by federal law to run background checks. Background checks are the best way to ensure folks who are a danger to themselves or others cannot buy firearms.

**Keep guns out of the hands of violent criminals and domestic abusers:** A woman is five times more likely to die if a gun is present in a domestic violence situation. We must close loopholes that allow abusive dating partners, abusive spouses, and individuals who have been convicted of misdemeanor stalking to purchase guns.

**Keep weapons of war off our streets:** There is no reason to allow weapons of war to be sold where folks without the proper training can buy them. We must work to keep these weapons off our streets, out of our schools, and away from those who seek to do harm.

**Support Red Flag laws:** An individual deemed a risk to themselves or others should not have access to firearms. Guns are only used in 5% of all suicides, but are responsible for over half of all suicide deaths. Additionally, there are numerous examples of warning signs with individuals who have committed mass shootings. Red Flag laws give family members and law enforcement officials the ability to temporarily restrict access to firearms from individuals who are at risk. This bipartisan solution can and will save lives.

**Support firearm research:** In the development of gun violence prevention policies it is critical to research the causes of gun violence. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) must be appropriately funded to perform research to solve this public health problem and provide much needed information to develop informed policies and laws that address the problem.



## Equality Under the Law

Much progress has been made in recent years toward equality and opportunity for all, both under the law and in our society at large, but there is still work to be done.

As a civil rights attorney, I believe we must stand united against all forms of inequality, prejudice, and discrimination, whether against women, members of the LGBTQ community, or anyone else. As a member of Congress, I will work to continue to erase barriers to equality in our society. I will be a champion for combating the challenges women continue to face, from the struggle for gender equality to stopping violence against women. I will also stand up for LGBTQ individuals and their rights to be free from harm and discrimination in all aspects of daily life.

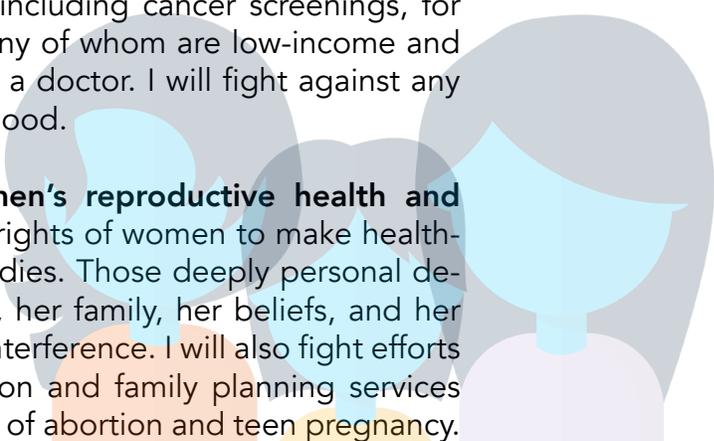
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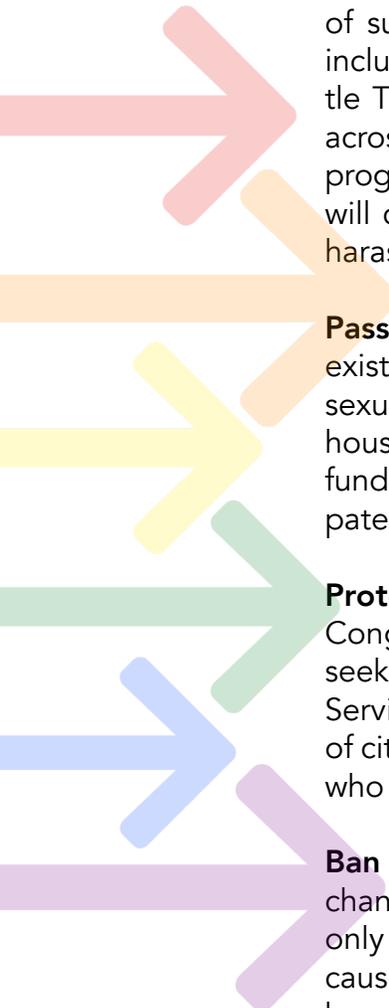
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**Enact paid family leave and expand childcare programs:** You shouldn’t have to choose between having a family and having a career. Paid family leave would allow you to take time off when you have or adopt a new child, when you or a family member gets sick, or when a member of your family is deployed in the military—and then return to work afterward. Making child care affordable for working families would enable more working parents to continue to work full-time.

**Stand with Planned Parenthood:** Planned Parenthood provides lifesaving access to healthcare, including cancer screenings, for millions of women and men, many of whom are low-income and would have no other way to see a doctor. I will fight against any effort to defund Planned Parenthood.

**Fight against attacks on women’s reproductive health and freedom:** I will stand up for the rights of women to make health-care choices about their own bodies. Those deeply personal decisions should involve a woman, her family, her beliefs, and her doctor—free from government interference. I will also fight efforts to restrict access to contraception and family planning services that have helped reduce the rate of abortion and teen pregnancy.





**Reduce violence against women:** Too many women in our country have experienced sexual harassment, sexual assault, and domestic violence. We must work to prevent this abuse and ensure victims of such incidents are provided with access to support services, including counseling and healthcare. I will resist efforts to dismantle Title IX protections for victims of sexual assault on campuses across the nation—we need to expand sexual violence prevention programs in our schools, not roll back protections. In Congress, I will continue to listen to and fight for victims. I will fight against harassment, assault, and gender-based violence in all forms.

**Pass the Equality Act:** This landmark legislation would amend existing civil rights laws to prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity with regards to employment, housing, credit, education, public spaces and services, federally funded programs, and jury service—so that everyone can participate equally in all aspects of American life.

**Protect transgender members of our military and recruits:** Congress must protect our brave servicemembers, and those seeking to join our military, regardless of their gender identity. Serving in the military and defending your country is a basic right of citizenship, and we should be thanking and supporting all those who are willing to serve.

**Ban conversion therapy:** Programs that purport to be able to change a person's sexual orientation or gender identity are not only discredited scams, they perpetuate bigotry. These programs cause real and lasting harm, especially to young people, and must be eliminated entirely.

**Bolster the fight against HIV/AIDS:** We have made tremendous strides in combating HIV/AIDS in recent decades, but there is still work to be done. In Congress, I will fight to fully fund, and expand, programs to educate, prevent, and treat HIV/AIDS. That includes programs that provide vital medical care for those with HIV/AIDS who are uninsured or underinsured. I will also fight to ensure access to PrEP (Truvada), which has been shown to reduce HIV infection by more than 90%, for every person who needs it.

**Fight for equality worldwide:** Same-sex relationships are still illegal in 72 countries, and punishable by death in 8 countries. In Congress, I will speak out against any and all efforts by foreign countries to enact laws and policies targeting their LGBTQ citizens, and ensure that American taxpayer funds are never used to perpetuate discrimination abroad.



Learn more at [ColinAllred.com](https://ColinAllred.com)

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