# Lambda Legal raises record £200 million plus to fight back against anti-gay laws



The LGBTQ+ legal advocacy organization, Lambda Legal, has raised $285 million - or £210 - as part of its Unstoppable Future campaign exceeding its original target by over $100 million, making it the largest fundraising initiative in the history of the LGBTQ+ movement. Hooray! The campaign, which started quietly in 2022, was a direct response to the escalating legal and political incursions on LGBTQ+ rights.

Of the $285 million raised, approximately $80 million is designated for immediate use, intended to bolster Lambda Legal’s capacity to hire new attorneys, expand its legal services, and enhance public education regarding LGBTQ+ rights. The balance comprises planned gifts amounting to around $205 million, which will ensure the organization’s sustainability well into the future. Individual donors significantly contributed to this financial surge, with 14 individuals, two foundations, and one law firm each donating over $1 million. The largest gift, of $25 million, came from the Kathryn G. Graham Trust. This fundraising success stands in contrast to a troubling trend where corporate sponsorship for LGBTQ+ causes has been receding, highlighting a shift toward grassroots support in times of adversity.

The urgency for such funding stems from a concerning surge in anti-LGBTQ+ legislation; since January, 59 laws have been enacted along with six executive orders targeting the rights of LGBTQ+ people and those living with HIV/AIDS. These statistics underscore the pressing nature of Lambda Legal's mission as the organisation aims to expand its legal team by 42%, growing from 36 to 51 members, and to increase its case docket capacity by 86% by the end of 2026. CEO Kevin Jennings emphasised the significance of this strategic expansion, stating, 'We are more ready than ever to challenge those who want to strip away and attack our liberty.'

Over its 50-year history, Lambda Legal has celebrated numerous successes, such as the landmark Supreme Court rulings that decriminalised gay sex in 2003 and legalised same-sex marriage in 2015. However, Jennings' remarks point to an ongoing commitment to educating the public and ensuring legal protections are not merely maintained but actively expanded. The organisation's current efforts underscore a stark reality: despite historical advancements, anti-LGBTQ+ forces from conservative groups like Alliance Defending Freedom, continue to pose significant challenges. Lambda Legal's strategic response aims not just to defend against these encroachments but also to establish a foundation for future rights advancements.

As Lambda Legal gears up for the upcoming 2024 election cycle, it acknowledges the necessity of an aggressive response to the many threats facing the community. The organisation's latest financial windfall places it in a stronger position than ever to combat discriminatory actions, not only preserving existing rights but also advocating for new protections. Membership growth within its legal team is poised to enhance its ability to tackle the increasing number of cases emerging from state legislatures.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://philanthropynewsdigest.org/news/lambda-legal-raises-285-million-far-exceeding-campaign-goals> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://apnews.com/article/959ccacb3a5b692cae04f806ada4559b> - Lambda Legal, a nonprofit organisation advocating for LGBTQ+ rights, has announced a significant fundraising success, raising $285 million—surpassing its goal by $105 million. The campaign, initiated quietly in 2022 in response to escalating legal and political attacks on LGBTQ+ rights, saw unprecedented contributions, including 14 individuals, two foundations, and one law firm donating over $1 million each. The largest gift of $25 million came from the Kathryn G. Graham Trust. Approximately $80 million will be used over the next five years to expand legal services, hire attorneys, and educate the public on LGBTQ+ rights, while the remaining $205 million consists of planned gifts. This surge in funding primarily came from individual donors, not corporations, amidst a notable retreat by corporate sponsors from LGBTQ+ causes. Lambda Legal has a storied history of legal victories, including pivotal Supreme Court rulings decriminalising gay sex in 2003 and legalising gay marriage in 2015. CEO Kevin Jennings emphasised the community's determination to protect and advance LGBTQ+ rights, especially amid federal actions rolling back protections for transgender and nonbinary individuals during President Donald Trump’s current administration. Despite these gains, Lambda Legal still lags behind conservative groups like Alliance Defending Freedom in fundraising.
3. <https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/in-the-face-of-unprecedented-discriminatory-attacks-lambda-legal-unveils-unstoppable-future-largest-single-campaign-to-advance-lgbtq-rights-302160142.html> - Lambda Legal has announced its $180 million comprehensive 'Unstoppable Future' strategy—the largest campaign in the history of the equality movement—to combat the wave of anti-equality legislation and discrimination against the LGBTQ+ community and those living with HIV. The campaign outlines a multipronged strategy to defend against anti-LGBTQ+ attacks, win new protections, and prepare for the future to ensure civil rights for the next generation. CEO Kevin Jennings stated, 'We will defend ourselves against harmful legislation, prevent a rollback of the rights we have won over the last 50 years, and win new protections for the most vulnerable of our community—ensuring an unstoppable future for the next 50 years and beyond.'
4. <https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/lambda-legal-celebrates-50-years-advancing-the-civil-rights-of-lgbtq-people-and-everyone-living-with-hiv-commits-to-being-unstoppable-ahead-301940933.html> - Lambda Legal, the nation's oldest and largest legal non-profit advocating for the LGBTQ+ and HIV+ communities, marks its 50th anniversary with advocacy events throughout the month of October. The organisation, along with its donors and allies, pledges to battle for another 50 years in the courthouse and the statehouse against the renewed onslaught on the LGBTQ+ community, with an emphasis on protecting transgender communities. The article highlights Lambda Legal's commitment to continue its work for the next 50 years, particularly in fighting the recent wave of attacks targeting transgender and nonbinary people, LGBTQ+ youth, and other marginalized LGBTQ+ communities.
5. <https://www.philanthropy.com/article/as-lgbtq-rights-come-under-threat-lambda-legal-mounts-effort-to-raise-180-million> - Lambda Legal, the nonprofit that helped win the landmark Supreme Court case guaranteeing the right to same-sex marriage, said it is seeking at least $180 million in additional funding to fight an onslaught of state legislation aimed at rolling back legal protections for gay and transgender people. Last month, Lambda Legal launched the 'Unstoppable Future' campaign, the most ambitious fundraising drive in its history. The organisation is urging donors to support its efforts to staff up and take on more cases, particularly at the state level, where more than 500 bills targeting LGBTQ+ people were proposed and nearly 90 were enacted last year.
6. <https://www.naacpldf.org/press-release/civil-and-human-rights-organizations-sue-trump-administration-over-executive-orders-banning-diversity-equity-inclusion-accessibility-and-erasing-transgender-people/> - The Legal Defense Fund (LDF) and Lambda Legal filed a federal lawsuit on behalf of nonprofit advocacy organisations challenging three anti-equity executive orders from President Trump related to diversity, equity, inclusion, accessibility, and transgender people. LDF and Lambda Legal claim these orders will severely limit the organisations’ ability to provide critical social and health services such as HIV treatment, fair housing, equal employment opportunities, affordable credit, civil rights protections, and many others. This would harm countless people across the United States, including people of colour, women, LGBTQ+ people, people with disabilities, and people living with HIV.