

TRANSADVOCATE

Is Erika Hilton the Most Powerful Trans Woman on Earth? Brazil Just Answered

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Abstract

Erika Hilton is the most powerful trans person in the world. Lula came back from a first-round loss to win Brazil's runoff. I argue trans congresswoman Erika Hilton is a big reason why: she helped end the six-day work week weeks before the vote.

Article



Everyone's talking about Lula's surprise win in Brazil.

I'm not going to hide it: I support Lula. This is me in São Paulo with my Lula towel.



But there's something almost nobody is talking about. A trans woman is one very important reason Lula won.

In Brazil, it's common to work six days a week with just one day off. That's officially over. Congress has passed a constitutional amendment that ends the "6×1" schedule. Brazil now has a 40-hour work week, with two days off and no pay cut.

One name is all over it: Erika Hilton.

Workers started this movement. The Life Beyond Work movement, led by city councillor Rick Azevedo, went viral, and Erika Hilton took their demands to Congress. She wrote the amendment and fought for it until it passed. A viral demand from ordinary workers is now part of Brazil's constitution.

Then there's the timing. Lula lost the first round. In the three weeks between that loss and the runoff, one big thing happened: the end of 6×1 passed Congress, and it passed resoundingly. Even Bolsonaro's allies ended up voting for it, because the public overwhelmingly wanted it.

Erika Hilton may be one of the most powerful trans women in the world, and she was central to getting this done. It will change life for everyone in Brazil who isn't a multimillionaire.

It's also proof that you don't need transphobia to win elections. What you need is to deliver for people and change the material conditions of the people you govern.

Lula won by a few points. I believe that's because voters saw a government making real change in their lives. They'll get an extra day off. They won't feel like they're working their lives away.

So yes, trans women can change history. They can be part of massive change. I know that because Erika Hilton exists.

Parabéns, Lula. Parabéns, Erika! You did it.

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