

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 16, 2017

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President of the United States
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As millions of Americans celebrate Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer (“LGBTQ”) Pride Month during June, we are writing to express our concerns with your administration’s treatment of the LGBTQ community.

Pride Month is a time when LGBTQ Americans and countless allies come together to celebrate the diversity that gives our country its strength. Since the beginning of your administration, you have claimed to be supportive of the LGBTQ community,¹ yet the actions of your administration tell a markedly different story.

Shortly after the inauguration, your U.S. Departments of Justice and Education rescinded guidance on Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (“Title IX”).² This guidance was requested by students, parents, public schools, colleges and universities, and Members of Congress to explain schools’ obligation to protect the rights of transgender students and to clarify how the Departments’ will enforce civil rights protections. Rescinding this guidance has once again caused uncertainty for transgender students and our nation’s schools.

Under your administration, the U.S. Census Bureau,³ U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development,⁴ and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services⁵ (“HHS”) have reversed course on even the most basic data-collection related to sexual orientation and gender identity. These data collection efforts were called for by expert panels, including the National Academies of Science,⁶ to measure whether federal programs are meeting the needs of LGBTQ people. Abandoning that data collection is an attack on this community.

¹ New York Times (2017, January 30). *Obama’s Protections for L.G.B.T. Workers Will Remain Under Trump* (<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/30/us/politics/obama-trump-protections-lgbt-workers.html>); NBC News (2017, May 9). *Citing ‘Trump Effect,’ Lawmakers Reintroduce Anti-Harassment Bill* (<http://www.nbcnews.com/feature/nbc-out/citing-trump-effect-lawmakers-reintroduce-anti-harassment-bill-n756476>).

² The Washington Post (2017, February 22). *Trump administration rolls back protections for transgender students* (https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/education/trump-administration-rolls-back-protections-for-transgender-students/2017/02/22/550a83b4-f913-11e6-bf01-d47f8cf9b643_story.html?utm_term=.5419641de4c7).

³ NBC News (2017, March 29). *LGBTQ Americans Won’t Be Counted in 2020 U.S. Census After All* (<http://www.nbcnews.com/feature/nbc-out/lgbtq-americans-won-t-be-counted-2020-u-s-census-n739911>).

⁴ Federal Register (2017, March 10), 82 FR 13359 (<https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2017-03-10/pdf/2017-04787.pdf>).

⁵ Federal Register (2017, March 13), 82 FR 13457 (<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2017/03/13/2017-04843/agency-information-collection-activities-proposed-collection-public-comment-request-proposed>); HHS ACL, Centers for Independent Living Revised Program Performance Reporting Instrument (2017, March 8), (<https://www.acl.gov/sites/default/files/news%202017-04/CIL-PPR-2017.docx>).

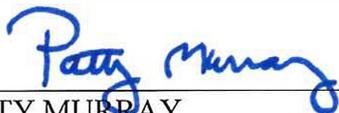
⁶ See for example, Institute of Medicine. Committee on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Health Issues Research Gaps Opportunities. (2011). *The health of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people: Building a foundation for better understanding*. Washington, DC: National Academies Press.

You have also nominated and appointed a series of homophobic and transphobic people to key posts in your administration. For example, your Director of the Office of Civil Rights at HHS, Roger Severino, has a long history of making bigoted statements toward lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people,⁷ which makes him unqualified to lead an office whose purpose is to ensure that “people have equal access and opportunities to participate in certain health care and human services programs without unlawful discrimination.” Your second nominee for Secretary of the Army, Mark Green, withdrew from consideration after the intense public outrage provoked by his extreme and unacceptable transphobic and homophobic comments.⁸ Your nominee for President of the Export Import Bank, former Congressman Scott Garrett, refused to pay his dues to the National Republican Campaign Committee because the Committee recruited and supported gay candidates.⁹ And the list goes on.

While your White House has said that you are “committed to protecting the rights of all Americans, including the LGBTQ community, and continues to be respectful and supportive of LGBTQ rights, just as [you were] throughout the election,”¹⁰ your actions as President are deeply concerning and in conflict with this statement.

As we celebrate Pride Month, we ask you to reflect on your Presidency and the harm you have caused to the LGBTQ community. We urge you to change course and to commit yourself to promoting equality and protecting the right of all Americans to live free from discrimination. If you do so, and truly commit to be an ally in the struggle for equality, we are prepared to work with you to pass the Equality Act, end the scourge of so-called conversion therapy, ensure schools protect the rights of LGBTQ students to have a safe place to learn, and much more. But if you refuse, and you continue pushing your anti-LGBTQ agenda, you should know that we will hold you accountable, every step of the way, for the harm that arises from your actions against LGBTQ Americans.

Sincerely,



PATTY MURRAY
United States Senator



MARIA CANTWELL
United States Senator

⁷ Daily Kos (2017, March 27) *Trump appoints anti-LGBT activist to head HHS civil rights office* (<http://www.dailykos.com/story/2017/3/27/1647733/-Trump-appoints-anti-LGBT-activist-to-head-HHS-civil-rights-office>).

⁸ The Washington Post (2017, May 5) *Mark Green withdraws as Trump's Army Secretary nominee, citing 'false and misleading attacks'* (https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/checkpoint/wp/2017/05/05/mark-green-withdraws-as-trumps-army-secretary-nominee-citing-false-and-misleading-attacks/?utm_term=.b232c37382cc).

⁹ Politico (July 16, 2016) *GOP lawmaker: No cash for campaign Arm because it backs gays* (<http://www.politico.com/story/2015/07/gop-garrett-hensarling-no-cash-for-campaign-arm-because-it-backs-gays-120201>).

¹⁰ NBC News (2017, May 9). *Citing 'Trump Effect,' Lawmakers Reinroduce Anti-Harassment Bill* (<http://www.nbcnews.com/feature/nbc-out/citing-trump-effect-lawmakers-reinroduce-anti-harassment-bill-n756476>).