



CITY OF PITTSBURGH  
**LGBTQIA+ COMMISSION**  
CITY - COUNTY BUILDING

September 21, 2023

The Honorable Joe Pittman  
Senate Majority Leader  
350 Main Capitol Building  
Senate Box 203041  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-3041

Dear Senator Pittman,

We are writing to you today because of your leadership role in the majority party in the Pennsylvania Senate. In March, SB 150 was introduced in the Senate. This bill would amend the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act (PHRA) by prohibiting discrimination based on "sexual orientation" and "gender identity or expression" in the same ways the PHRA prohibits discrimination based on race, color, familial status, religious creed, ancestry, age, sex, national origin, handicap or disability, or use of guide or support animals. Also in March, SB 150 was referred to the Labor & Industry Committee, where it remains without consideration.

As you know, a companion bill (HB 300, "The Fairness Act") was passed by the PA House of Representatives this past May. The full House action was the only time in our commonwealth's history that either chamber approved statewide protections against discrimination for LGBT persons. The first bill of this type was introduced 47 years ago.

All Pennsylvanians and their elected leaders are on the doorstep of action that will help change the lives of at least half a million LGBT persons and their families in our Commonwealth. If SB 150 is passed by the Senate, reconciled with HB 300, and signed by the Governor, Pennsylvania will no longer be the lone Northeast state that does not have anti-discrimination protections for its LGBT citizens and will join the 20+ states nationwide that do.

Currently, 74 cities and towns in PA have adopted LGBT anti-discrimination ordinances, but 2,500 have not, leaving more than 60% of the state's LGBT population more vulnerable to discrimination.

As the Senate majority leader, you can change the lived experience of hundreds of thousands of LGBT persons in our state. Passage and enactment of the Fairness Act will have an effect on the housing, employment, safety, experience at school, and the physical and mental well-being of LGBT persons who live in Pennsylvania.

If you use your position to move this bill, you will save some persons from losing their home, from discrimination at work, and some children from unending bullying at school by helping to mitigate the anti-LGBTQIA+ climate that is growing in our state.

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Cathryn Calhoun • Denise DeSimone • Calvin Aster Ecker • Billy Hileman • Sue Kerr • Bruce Kraus  
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Sarah Rosso • Rev. Deryck Tines • Guillermo Velazquez

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We also want to recognize that fair treatment of LGBT persons does not infringe on anyone's religious liberty. The bill's sponsors have taken steps to help ensure everyone's constitutional rights are respected in this legislation.

We strongly urge you to do what you can to move SB 150 out of committee for full consideration of the Senate. We are confident that it will have the votes to pass and we welcome your support. The citizens of Pennsylvania deserve a Senate floor vote on SB 150. The only thing in the way of the will of the people is the willingness of the Senate leadership to let democracy happen.

Sincerely,

Sarah Rosso  
Co-Chair  
Pittsburgh LGBTQIA+ Commission

Sue Kerr  
Co-Chair  
Pittsburgh LGBTQIA+ Commission

Billy Hileman  
Secretary  
Pittsburgh LGBTQIA+ Commission

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