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LGBTQI DATA INCLUSION ACT (H.R. 4176)

[APA supports bill to ensure federal agencies collect voluntary, self-disclosed data on sexual orientation and gender identity](#)

The LGBTQI Data Inclusion Act is a vital and necessary bill that would require uniformity amongst all federal agencies to collect data on sexual orientation and gender identity in federal surveys. While some such data is currently collected and federal agencies have made progress, LGBTQ people remain overlooked in many federal data collection efforts.

“Based on existing data, we know that sexual and gender minorities have less access to health care and experience higher rates of certain illnesses, such as depression, anxiety, cancer, and HIV/AIDS, compared with the general population, and are also more likely to be targets of violence than other groups,” said Frank C. Worrell, PhD, president of the American Psychological Association. “Data collection is critically important to improve our understanding of the life experiences of this population in order to improve their mental health, physical health, and well-being.”

APA’s 2016 [Resolution on Data about Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity](#) explains the importance of survey data for assessing the need for public policies that address group disparities in mental health, health, and social outcomes, as well as for evaluating the impact of these policies. The inclusion of sexual orientation and gender identity as demographic variables enables scholars, policymakers, and the public to interpret and gain a more accurate understanding of their relationship to important health and social outcomes. For example, with the introduction of items regarding sexual and gender minority status to the 2000 U.S. Census, our nation benefited from a dramatic increase in understanding the lives and conditions of people who are in a same-sex couple household.

Public policy uses of SOGI data

Collecting data and demographic information is critical to the government’s understanding of diverse communities, as well as the efficacy of services and programs aimed at addressing community needs. [OMB](#) called for more representative and better-quality SOGI data and [Healthy People 2020](#) added an objective aimed at increasing the number of population-based data systems including among their core questions gathering sexual orientation and gender identity data. More recently, the consensus report by the [National Academies](#) concluded that questions about sexual orientation, gender identity, and variations in sex characteristics can and should be added to federally supported surveys.

- **Understanding discrimination.** According to the [Williams Institute](#), many of the thirteen million people ages 13 and older in the U.S. who identify as LGBTQ experience discrimination in many aspects of life. About half of all LGBTQ people lack protections because nondiscrimination statutes in most states do not consider sexual orientation and gender protected characteristics. APA’s [2019 Stress in America](#) survey revealed that most LGBTQ adults (64%) say that discrimination has hindered them from having a full and productive life compared to 44% of all adults.
- **Mental and physical well-being.** Sexual and gender minorities experience greater health disparities compared to heterosexual and cisgender populations. They also have higher rates of PTSD, depression, anxiety, obsessive-compulsive disorder, suicidal behaviors, and gender dysphoria. Enhanced data collection is central to understanding and addressing LGBTQI+ mental health inequities.
- **Intersex.** A proposed amendment would add variations in sex characteristics (also known as intersex traits) to the data voluntarily collected. Intersex is a general term used to refer to individuals born with, or who develop naturally in puberty, biological sex characteristics which are not specifically male or female. This revision makes the bill more inclusive by incorporating intersex and other sexual and gender minority individuals.

Congress must act now

Passage of this bill is essential to better understand the experiences of LGBTQI+ communities, generate policy solutions and evaluate the effectiveness of policies aimed at advancing equity. APA supports the amendment in the nature of a substitute for the LGBTQI+ Data Inclusion Act and urges Congress to quickly take up and adopt this important proposal.

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