

June 14, 2022

The Honorable Carolyn Maloney  
House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform  
2157 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Raúl Grijalva  
House of Representatives  
1511 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairwoman Maloney and Congressman Grijalva:

As a group of 156 organizations committed to advancing equality and opportunity for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, and other sexual and gender diverse (LGBTQI+) people in the United States, we are writing to voice our enthusiastic support for the amendment in the nature of a substitute and passage of the LGBTQI+ Data Inclusion Act (H.R. 4176).

The LGBTQ Data Inclusion Act, as introduced, would facilitate the collection of voluntary, self-disclosed demographic data on sexual orientation and gender identity across federal surveys. The amendment in the nature of a substitute would add variations in sex characteristics (also known as intersex traits) to the data voluntarily collected, and would accordingly change the bill title to the LGBTQI+ Data Inclusion Act. Collecting this information in federally supported surveys (such as the Current Population Survey and National Health Interview Survey) is essential to improving the well-being of LGBTQI+ populations across key areas of life. For example, although data are limited, research indicates that LGBTQI+ communities experience disparities across multiple domains of life compared to non-LGBTQI+ populations. This includes evidence of higher rates of poverty, unemployment, and economic instability;<sup>i</sup> experiences of homelessness and housing insecurity;<sup>ii</sup> worse mental and physical health outcomes;<sup>iii</sup> heightened barriers to access adequate health care<sup>iv</sup>; and widespread experiences of discrimination<sup>v</sup>. Due to the intersecting forces of racism, xenophobia, ableism, ageism, and transphobia, for LGBTQI+ communities of color, LGBTQI+ people with disabilities, LGBTQI+ older adults, and transgender people, these disparities are often even more pronounced.<sup>vi</sup> LGBTQI+-inclusive data collection is a critical tool to better identify and address these disparities and to promote more equitable outcomes and opportunities for LGBTQI+ communities.<sup>vii</sup>

Currently, most surveys fielded by the federal government do not collect data on sexual orientation, gender identity, or variations in sex characteristics.<sup>viii</sup> For example, although some surveys, such as the decennial census and American Community Survey, ask questions that allow for the identification of cohabitating same-sex couples, it is estimated that only 1 in 6 LGBTQ individuals are captured by those kinds of questions.<sup>ix</sup> Although progress has been made in recent years, the overall lack of routine

data collection on sexual orientation, gender identity, and variations in sex characteristics poses a significant obstacle for policymakers, researchers, service providers, and advocates dedicated to improving the wellbeing of LGBTQI+ communities, especially those living at the intersection of multiple marginalized identities.

The federal government collects survey data on a wide range of subjects and populations<sup>x</sup> and is uniquely positioned to engage in LGBTQI+-inclusive data collection to generate accurate, consistent, and representative data at a scale that allows for the disaggregation necessary to describe the diversity of LGBTQI+ communities.<sup>xi</sup> As demonstrated in the recent consensus report by the National Academies, questions about sexual orientation, gender identity, and variations in sex characteristics can and should be added to federally supported surveys.<sup>xii</sup> By doing so, federal agencies can take meaningful steps to fulfill the Biden-Harris administration's priorities to promote equity for LGBTQI+ and other underserved communities through various actions, including but not limited to expanding data collection efforts.

Passage of this bill is essential to better understand the experiences of LGBTQI+ communities, generate policy solutions that are inclusive of LGBTQI+ people and their needs, and to evaluate the effectiveness of those policies to reduce disparities and advance equity. Again, we strongly support the amendment in the nature of a substitute for the LGBTQI+ Data Inclusion Act (H.R. 4176) and urge Congress to quickly take up and adopt this important proposal.

Thank you for your consideration. Please do not hesitate to contact Caroline Medina, [cmolina@americanprogress.org](mailto:cmolina@americanprogress.org), and Madeline Shepherd [mshpherd@americanprogress.org](mailto:mshpherd@americanprogress.org) with any questions.

Signed in partnership,

1Hood Power

A Better Balance

Ace and Aro Alliance of Central Ohio

Advocates for Youth

AGE of Central Texas

AIDS Action Baltimore

AIDS Alabama South

AIDS Foundation Chicago

allgo

American Academy of HIV Medicine

American Psychological Association

American Public Health Association

American Trans Resource Hub  
Amida Care  
APLA Health  
Arizona Trans Youth and Parent Organization  
Athlete Ally  
Atlanta Pride Committee  
Austin LGBT Coalition on Aging  
Autistic Self Advocacy Network  
Believe Out Loud  
BiNet USA  
Brooklyn Community Pride Center, Inc.  
Cathedral of Hope United Church of Christ  
Center for American Progress  
Center for Applied Transgender Studies  
Center for Black Equity  
Center for Disability Rights  
Center for Economic and Policy Research  
Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)  
Center for Reproductive Rights  
CenterLink: The Community of LGBT Centers  
Colors+  
Compton's Table  
Corktown Health  
Council for Global Equality  
CrescentCare  
Damien Center  
DBGM, Inc.  
Dolan Research International, LLC  
Elton John AIDS Foundation  
Engel O'Neil Advertising & Public Relations  
Equality California  
Equality Illinois  
Equitas Health  
Erie County Dems LGBTQIA+ Caucus

Erie Gay News  
Family Eldercare  
Family Equality  
Family Values @ Work  
Fenway Health  
Freedom for All Americans  
Gay Elder Circle  
Georgia Equality  
GLBTQ Legal Advocates and Defenders (GLAD)  
GLMA: Health Professionals Advancing LGBTQ Equality  
GLSEN  
GLSEN New Mexico  
Health Equity Alliance for LGBTQ+ New Mexicans  
HealthHIV  
Hetrick-Martin Institute  
Hispanic Federation  
HIV + Hepatitis Policy Institute  
HIV Medicine Association  
Howard Brown Health  
Hugh Lane Wellness Foundation  
Human Rights Campaign  
interACT: Advocates for Intersex Youth  
Jacobs Institute of Women's Health  
John Snow, Inc.  
Justice in Aging  
Kachemak bay Family Planning  
Lancaster LGBTQ+ Coalition  
Lawrence  
Lee McAvoy, LMHC  
Let's Kick ASS AIDS Survivor Syndrome  
LGBTQ Center OC  
LGBTQ Community Center of Southern Nevada  
LGBTQ Victory Institute  
LGBTQ+ & Equity Consulting, LLC

LGBTQ+ Spectrum of Findlay  
Los Angeles LGBT Center  
Lyon-Martin Community Health Services  
MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger  
Methodist Federation for Social Action  
Michigan Organization on Adolescent Sexual Health (MOASH)  
Minority Veterans of America  
Movement Advancement Project  
Naper Pride  
NASTAD  
National Center for Lesbian Rights  
National Center for Transgender Equality  
National Coalition for LGBTQ Health  
National Community Reinvestment Coalition (NCRC)  
National Family Planning & Reproductive Health Association  
National LGBT Cancer Network  
National LGBTQ Task Force  
National LGBTQ+ Bar Association  
National Organization for Women  
National Women's Law Center  
National Working Positive Coalition  
New York Transgender Advocacy Group  
North Carolina AIDS Action Network  
NW PA Pride Alliance, Inc.  
one-n-ten  
Out & Equal Workplace Advocates  
Out To Innovate  
Out Youth  
OutCenter Southwest Michigan  
OutNebraska  
Outright Vermont  
PFLAG National  
PGH Equality Center  
Philanthrofund Foundation

Positive Women's Network-USA  
PowerOn, a program of LGBT Technology Institute  
PrEP4All  
Prevention Access Campaign  
Pride at Work  
Pride Center of New Jersey  
Prism United  
Project Weber/RENEW  
Resource Center  
Roots of Change  
SAGE  
SAGE Metro Detroit  
San Diego Pride  
SF LGBT Center  
SIECUS  
Silver State Equality-Nevada  
Still Bisexual  
The AIDS Institute  
The Center on Colfax, Denver, CO  
The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights  
The LGBT Center of Greater Reading  
the Montrose Center  
The Source LGBT+ Center  
The Trevor Project  
The Well Project  
Thriving Mental Health Counseling NY PLLC  
Trans Maryland  
Transgender Education Network of Texas (TENT)  
Transgender Resource Center of New Mexico  
Transhealth Northampton  
Treatment Action Group  
U.S. People Living with HIV Caucus  
Umoja Behavioral Health PC  
Union for Reform Judaism

University of Nevada Las Vegas  
URGE: Unite for Reproductive & Gender Equity  
Vivent Health  
Waves Ahead Corp  
We Are Family  
Whitman-Walker Institute  
Woodhull Freedom Foundation  
YWCA USA

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<sup>i</sup> M.V. Lee Badgett, Soon Kyu Choi, and Bianca D.M. Wilson, “LGBT Poverty in the United States: A Study of Differences Between Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Groups” (Los Angeles: Williams Institute, 2019), available at <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/National-LGBT-Poverty-Oct-2019.pdf>; National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, “Understanding the Well-Being of LGBTQI+ Populations” (Washington: 2020), available at <https://www.nap.edu/read/25877/chapter/1>.

<sup>ii</sup> Adam P. Romero, Shoshana K. Goldberg, Luis A. Vasquez, “LGBT People and Housing Affordability, Discrimination, and Homelessness” (Los Angeles: Williams Institute, 2020), available at <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/publications/lgbt-housing-instability/>.

<sup>iii</sup> National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, “Understanding the Well-Being of LGBTQI+ Populations” (Washington: 2020), available at <https://www.nap.edu/read/25877/chapter/1>; Amy Rosenwohl-Mack et al., “A National Study on the Physical and Mental Health of Intersex Adults in the U.S.,” PLoS ONE (2020) 15(10): e0240088, available at <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0240088>.

<sup>iv</sup> Ibid; L. Zeeman and K. Aranda, “A Systematic Review of the Health and Healthcare Inequalities for People with Intersex Variance,” International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health (2020), 17(18): 6533, available at <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph17186533>.

<sup>v</sup> Sharita Gruberg, Lindsay Mahowald, and John Halpin, “The State of the LGBTQ Community in 2020: A National Public Opinion Study” (Washington: Center for American Progress, 2020), available at <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/state-lgbtq-community-2020/>; Caroline Medina and Lindsay Mahowald, “Key Issues Facing People With Intersex Traits” (Washington: Center for American Progress, 2021), available at <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/key-issues-facing-people-intersex-traits/>.

<sup>vi</sup> See, for example, Lindsay Mahowald, “LGBTQ People of Color Encounter Heightened Discrimination,” (Washington: Center for American Progress, 2021), available at <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/lgbtq-people-color-encounter-heightened-discrimination/>; Caroline Medina and others, “The United States Must Advance Economic Security for Disabled LGBTQI+ Workers” (Washington: Center for American Progress, 2021), available at <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/united-states-must-advance-economic-security-disabled-lgbtqi-workers/>; Caroline Medina and others, “Protecting and Advancing Health Care for Transgender Adult Communities” (Washington: Center for American Progress, 2021), available at <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/protecting-advancing-health-care-transgender-adult-communities/>.

<sup>vii</sup> National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, “Measuring Sex, Gender Identity, and Sexual Orientation” (Washington: The National Academies Press, 2022), available at <https://www.nap.edu/catalog/26424/measuring-sex-gender-identity-and-sexual-orientation>.

<sup>viii</sup> National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, “Understanding the Well-Being of LGBTQI+ Populations” (Washington: 2020), available at <https://www.nap.edu/read/25877/chapter/1>.

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<sup>ix</sup> Caroline Medina and Lindsay Mahowald, “Collecting Data About LGBTQI+ and Other Sexual and Gender-Diverse Communities,” (Washington: Center for American Progress, 2022), available at <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/collecting-data-about-lgbtqi-and-other-sexual-and-gender-diverse-communities/>

<sup>x</sup> Jennifer M. Ortman and Karen L. Parker, “Why Do Federal Agencies Ask About Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI) on Surveys?” (Washington: Federal Committee on Statistical Methodology, 2021), available at [https://nces.ed.gov/FCSM/pdf/FCSM\\_21\\_01\\_062221.pdf](https://nces.ed.gov/FCSM/pdf/FCSM_21_01_062221.pdf)

<sup>xi</sup> National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, “Understanding the Well-Being of LGBTQI+ Populations” (Washington: 2020), available at <https://www.nap.edu/read/25877/chapter/1>.

<sup>xii</sup> Caroline Medina and Lindsay Mahowald, “Collecting Data About LGBTQI+ and Other Sexual and Gender-Diverse Communities,” (Washington: Center for American Progress, 2022), available at <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/collecting-data-about-lgbtqi-and-other-sexual-and-gender-diverse-communities/>