



Legislation Text

File #: Res 31738, Version: 1

CITY OF SEATTLE

RESOLUTION _____

A RESOLUTION requesting the United States Congress to pass the Equality Act to ensure that federal civil rights laws are fully inclusive of protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity or expression.

WHEREAS, The City of Seattle has a long history of opposing discrimination based on race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, and sex; and

WHEREAS, Ordinance 125100, adopted August 1, 2016, recognizes that members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) community still face threats to their physical safety, economic security, and overall well-being, and The City of Seattle has a compelling interest in protecting the physical and psychological well-being of minors, including LGBTQ youth, and in protecting its minors against exposure to serious harms caused by conversion therapy; and

WHEREAS, Resolution 31224, adopted on June 21, 2010, expressed the City Council's commitment to full equal rights for all Seattle residents and City employees regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity and established that it is City policy for City departments to work with the Seattle Office for Civil Rights and the Seattle Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Commission as they assess the needs of Seattle's LGBT community and propose community and City strategies for meeting those needs; and

WHEREAS, Ordinance 125231, adopted on December 21, 2016, changed the name of the LGBT Commission to the Seattle Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ) Commission, adding the word "Queer" to the Commission's name to expand the Commission's advocacy for the legal rights for all individuals, including all people marginalized within society due to gender identity and sexual

orientation; and

WHEREAS, transgender women and transgender people of color are more likely to be turned away from or experience harassment and assault in shelters: the National Transgender Discrimination Survey, conducted in 2008, reported that almost one in three transgender people seeking refuge in homeless shelters were turned away, while 55 percent were harassed, 25 percent were physically assaulted, and 22 percent were sexually assaulted in the shelters they were allowed into, and 42 percent of transgender shelter-seekers were forced to live as the wrong gender in order to be allowed to stay; and

WHEREAS, it is a unifying principle of our democracy that individuals should be able to fully participate in society, including LGBTQ immigrants and refugees, both documented and undocumented: discrimination undermines both individual and societal stability; and

WHEREAS, LGBTQ people commonly experience discrimination in credit, education, employment, housing, government-funded programs, access to health care, jury service, and public accommodations such as stores, restaurants, and transportation services; and

WHEREAS, women commonly experience discrimination in government-funded programs and public accommodations, including sexual harassment, differential pricing, and denial of services in places such as stores, restaurants, access to women's reproductive health that covers their needs, and transportation services; and

WHEREAS, supporting positive identity development for LGBTQ children must be safeguarded so LGBTQ families have the right to keep their children as well as the right to adopt and foster children; and

WHEREAS, the City Council and Mayor recognize the need to protect resources and support for LGBTQ parents and youth such as parent groups, family programming, school health clinics and after-school programs; and

WHEREAS, regular and ongoing discrimination contributes to negative social, health, and economic outcomes; and

WHEREAS, the states of California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, Iowa, Maine, Maryland, Minnesota, Nevada, New York, New Mexico, New Jersey, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Washington, as well as the District of Columbia, have laws prohibiting gender-based discrimination in employment, housing, and public accommodations; and

WHEREAS, members of Congress have carefully crafted a federal solution to discrimination against LGBTQ people and women: the Equality Act; NOW, THEREFORE,

**BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SEATTLE, THE MAYOR
CONCURRING, THAT:**

Section 1. As public officials elected to protect the welfare of The City of Seattle, we find that federal laws that fully prohibit discrimination based on gender identity or expression are essential to furthering the well-being of the residents of and visitors to Seattle.

Section 2. We affirm that women and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) people have a right to live free from discrimination in the core aspects of their lives, including but not limited to employment, education, housing, public accommodations, all government-funded programs, and jury service.

Section 3. We call upon Congress to reintroduce and enact the Equality Act to ensure that federal civil rights laws are fully inclusive of protections based on sexual orientation, gender identity, and sex.

Section 4. We direct the City Clerk to send a copy of this resolution and proclamation, duly adopted, to Senators Patty Murray, Maria Cantwell, and Jeff Merkley; Representative David Cicilline; the Executive Director of the LGBT Congressional Equality Caucus; the President of the United States of America; and civil rights leader Richard H. Noble.

Section 5. Proclamation. The City Council and Mayor hereby proclaim March 13, 2017, Equality Act Day.

Adopted by the City Council the _____ day of _____, 2017, and signed by me in open session in authentication of its adoption this _____ day of _____, 2017.

President _____ of the City Council

The Mayor concurred the _____ day of _____, 2017.

Edward B. Murray, Mayor

Filed by me this _____ day of _____, 2017.

Monica Martinez Simmons, City Clerk

(Seal)