

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 20, 2016

The Honorable Dannel P. Malloy
Governor of Connecticut
210 Capitol Ave.
Hartford, CT 06106

The Honorable Bob Duff
Senate Majority Leader
Legislative Office Building
Room 3300
Hartford, CT 06106

The Honorable Brendan Sharkey
Speaker of the House
Legislative Office Building
Room 4100
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Governor Malloy, Majority Leader Duff, and Speaker Sharkey:

We are writing to express our sincere gratitude for the support you have shown the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) community in Connecticut. The recent passage of discriminatory laws in states such as North Carolina and Mississippi is an affront to decency and to basic human rights. By enacting laws that openly discriminate against our fellow citizens because of their gender identity or sexual orientation, the leaders of these states are violating the fundamental principles of equality and justice upon which our country is based. Connecticut has chosen a different path, and we are grateful for the role you have played in making our state more welcoming and more diverse.

To provide our LGBT citizens anything less than the full protection of the law would be a disgrace to our state. Thankfully, Connecticut's laws protect the rights of LGBT people. These laws are comprehensive, ranging from those that prohibit discrimination in housing and employment to those that protect the right to health care for transgender people and the adoption rights of same-sex couples. These laws don't grant any special rights or privileges to LGBT individuals; they simply clarify that the protections of the law must apply to us all equally in a just society.

Furthermore, North Carolina and Mississippi have already faced enormous backlash from companies, both large and small, that have condemned and are severing ties with states that choose to discriminate against LGBT individuals. In today's very competitive global economy, workers and businesses are abandoning states with discriminatory laws and are choosing to do business with companies in states that promote equality. In Connecticut, we are proud to be the home of world-class companies and a skilled and diverse workforce. Our commitment to equality and diversity makes us an even more appealing environment in which to live, work and raise a family.

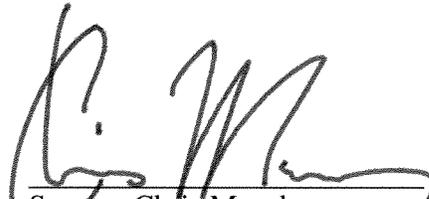
When Governor Malloy instituted a travel ban for Connecticut state employees to North Carolina in response to its discrimination legislation, he said, “Nearly two decades ago, Connecticut was among the first states to pass a comprehensive anti-discrimination law concerning sexual orientation, and three years ago I proudly signed a law adding gender identity and expression to those statutes. We need to do what we can to stand up and act against laws that encourage – as a matter of public policy – discrimination and endangerment of our citizenry.” We agree fully with these sentiments and are proud to stand in solidarity.

Connecticut is a leader in ensuring all residents enjoy freedom from discrimination under the law – whether at home, at work or in the classroom – but we know that the fight for equality is far from over. We are committed to working in partnership with you on the federal, state and local levels to fight all forms of discrimination and improve the lives of all our citizens now and in the future. We hope you will continue your good work as we reach for these goals.

Sincerely,



Senator Richard Blumenthal



Senator Chris Murphy



Representative James A. Himes



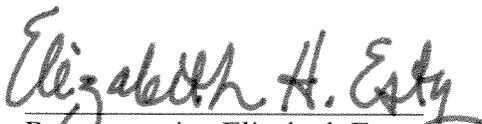
Representative Rosa DeLauro



Representative John Larson



Representative Joe Courtney



Representative Elizabeth Esty