



Legislation Text

File #: 14-1461, **Version:** 1

Resolution Calling on the Michigan Legislature to Ban Discrimination Based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Without Further Delay

Whereas; Michigan's Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act, Public Act 453 of 1976, prohibits discrimination in employment, housing, public accommodations, public services and educational facilities based on religion, race, color, national origin, age, sex, height, weight, familial status, or marital status;

Whereas; Representative Jim Dressel (R-Holland) first introduced legislation in 1983 to extend the protection of the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights to the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) community;

Whereas; Thirty-one years later neither state nor federal law prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. As a result, it remains legal to fire someone solely for being gay or transgender, to deny someone housing based solely on their sexual orientation, and to refuse to serve someone based only on their gender identity;

Whereas; Ann Arbor's State Senator, Rebekah Warren recently proposed new language for the Elliott Larson Act that would make in fully inclusive, with gender identity and sexual orientation protections;

Whereas; Ann Arbor's State Representatives, Jeff Irwin and Adam Zemke, are co-sponsors for the companion bill in the State House;

Whereas; Michigan's own Department of Civil Rights has concluded that discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity in Michigan "exists and is significant" and "has direct negative economic effects on Michigan" and has recommended that the Michigan Legislature expand the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act to include both sexual orientation and gender identity;

Whereas; Thirty-three Michigan cities have passed local civil rights ordinances banning discrimination based on both sexual orientation and gender identity, including the City of Ann Arbor in 1978;

Whereas; The City Council of Ann Arbor is considering additional protections to be included in the Human Rights Ordinance, protections that are currently not supported by State or Federal law;

Whereas; Business leaders from across Michigan have come together to form the Michigan Competitive Workforce Coalition to affirm that basic fairness and equality are cornerstone of our economy and that including sexual orientation and gender identity in Michigan's Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act strengthens that cornerstone at the very time Michigan is pushing hardest toward economic recovery;

Whereas; Eighteen states and the District of Columbia have already adopted legislation prohibiting

discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity; and

Whereas; All hardworking people in our state, including those who are gay and transgender, should have the opportunity to earn a living and provide for themselves and their families. No one should have to live in fear that they could be legally fired for reasons that have nothing to do with their job performance;

RESOLVED, That the City of Ann Arbor hereby calls upon the Michigan Legislature to enact legislation to amend the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act to ban discrimination based on both sexual orientation and gender identity without further delay;

RESOLVED, That the City of Ann Arbor calls upon the Michigan Legislature to enact fully inclusive legislation. It is essential to include protection based on sexual orientation and gender identity. Fair-minded Michiganders cannot and will not support legislation that will not protect the transgender residents of our state;

RESOLVED, That the City of Ann Arbor calls upon the Michigan Legislature to resist attempts to add provisions to the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act that would allow employers and businesses to use religion to discriminate against LGBT Michiganders. Compliance with generally applicable civil rights statutes historically has not been and cannot be a matter of personal preference; and

RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution shall be transmitted to the Speaker of the Michigan House of Representatives, the Majority Leader of the Michigan Senate, Governor Snyder, State Representatives Adam Zemke and Jeff Irwin, House Minority Leader Tim Greimel, State Senator Rebekah Warren and Senate Minority Leader Gretchen Whitmer.

Sponsored by: Council Members Briere, Taylor and Warpehoski