



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Response to Trump Administration Efforts to Erase Transgender, Intersex and Nonbinary Civil Rights

SANTA CRUZ, CA — OCT. 22, 2018 — The New York Times reported this week that the U.S. Health and Human Services Department is asserting a legal definition of sex under Title IX, the federal civil rights law that bans gender discrimination in education programs that receive federal funding, to narrowly define gender as a biological, immutable condition determined by genitalia at birth. If approved by the Trump administration's Justice Department, the move would solidify a legal rolling back of protections currently afforded to transgender, intersex and gender nonbinary people under federal civil rights law, and would virtually erase gender identities other than male or female, unchangeable, as determined by the genitals that a person is born with.

Locally, the GLBT Alliance of Santa Cruz County, the Diversity Center, the Queer Youth Task Force, the UCSC Lionel Cantú Queer Center, Out In Our Faith, TransFamilies of Santa Cruz, Pajaro Valley Pride, Santa Cruz Pride, PFLAG of Santa Cruz County, Temple Beth El, the Safe Schools Project and the Santa Cruz Dyke-Trans March all stand together to emphatically denounce this anti-transgender attack by the Trump administration as hateful and harmful, as it would essentially deny the existence of transgender, intersex and gender nonbinary people.

At stake are critical education, health and labor nondiscrimination laws and federal funding that protect transgender, intersex and gender nonconforming people. The impacts, should this guidance be accepted by the Department of Justice, could result in wide-spread gender confirming-related health care coverage denials, denying trans and gender nonconforming youth the use of facilities in public schools and universities that comport with one's gender identity, and protections against wrongful housing or employment discrimination for transgender and gender nonconforming individuals.

"There is no evidence showing that the allowing trans kids to school facilities that align with their gender identity, or providing trans-inclusive healthcare actually hurts anyone," says Adam Spickler, Communications Secretary of the GLBT Alliance. "On the contrary, removing those

protections absolutely places thousands of transgender, intersex and gender nonbinary youth and adults at great risk." Spickler, who was appointed in lieu of election to the Cabrillo College Board of Trustees this past August and is the first trans-male elected official to hold public office anywhere in the state of California, is concerned about the ripple effect if the Trump administration accepts this narrowed definition of sex and gender. "It is critical that all of us make our feelings known that this type of targeted hatred from the federal government will not be tolerated," says Spickler. "Those of us most at risk, especially youth, need our allies to help us fight for the nondiscrimination protections we so critically and fairly deserve."

Joining Spickler are a host of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) and allied community leaders from across the county. "This will greatly hinder our work with supporting LGBTQ students and their safety in all of our schools, says Ron Indra, Director, Safe Schools Project of Santa Cruz County. "By hurting our students this will do damage lasting decades for so many individuals."

Rabbi Paula, Senior Rabbi at Temple Beth El in Aptos notes, "Jewish tradition teaches that each and every person is created in the image of the divine, no exceptions. Our transgender, gender fluid, non-binary, queer friends and family members all reflect the spark of love, beauty and dignity. This is what it means to live by spiritual values and those who deny this are twisting religion to fit an ideology of fear and hatred." Rabbi Marcus is joined by Out In Our Faith, a contingent of over 20 religious organizations who actively affirm and celebrate LGBTQ members of their congregations.

The Diversity Center's Executive Director, Sharon Papo, has had a pit in her stomach since first hearing the news. "This Administration has repeatedly attempted to erase transgender people and deny them civil rights protections," says Papo. "There is a large human rights community that will continue to stand with the transgender community. We cannot and will not stand for this."

Travis Becker, Director of the UCSC Lionel Cantú Queer Center represents hundreds of queer and transgender students on the college's campus. "This move would be a continuation of the current administration's disturbing pattern of chipping away at people's existing protections and rights, and directly targeting the Trans community," said Becker. "As we approach the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall uprising, it is so clear that the fight is far from over. Trans people, Intersex people and Nonbinary people will not be erased!"

Stuart Rosenstein, Chair of the Queer Youth Task Force of Santa Cruz County notes that with the first shot being aimed at dismantling Title IX protections in education, it is youth who will suffer most; "Trans and gender nonconforming youth, who continue to be on the forefront of leadership within the LGBTQ/ally movement, will not be silenced or erased. We stand in solidarity with Trans youth and their allies."

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