

EQUALITY SOUTH DAKOTA

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MAYOR'S OFFICE

Office of the Mayor City of Rapid City 300 6th Street Rapid City, SD 57701

Dear Mayor Hanks and President Kooker, LACKOT

I'm writing on behalf of Equality South Dakota, a statewide education and advocacy organization with over 4,000 members -- more than 1,300 in Rapid City. Our aim is to make South Dakota an even better place to live without regard to one's sexual orientation or gender identity. We envision a future where all South Dakota families can live safely and openly – at home, at work and in the community.

Last year we launched our Workplace Diversity Project through which we are encouraging employers across the state to update their non-discrimination policies to include sexual orientation and gender identity. Putting good intentions in written policy sends a positive message to gay and transgender employees and job seekers, many of whom are fearful in the workplace in the absence of any legal protections. I'm pleased to report that 43 of the 50 largest private employers in South Dakota have joined our growing list of Workplace Diversity Champions. I've attached the list here.

While the private sector is leading the way and has long recognized the bottomline value of embracing diversity, there are many forward-thinking employers from the public sector who have also updated their policies. This letter is to ask you to use your office to show leadership on this issue. Specifically, we are hoping to see an update to the current employment non-discrimination policy that relates to City employees with the addition of two categories: sexual orientation and gender identity. Given recent events, we believe this modest step would go a long way towards promoting Rapid City as a safe and tolerant city for all people.

Last year, the City Council gave serious consideration to this same request but decided not to take formal action. Their hesitation was based on concern that unanticipated liabilities might be created. There was also doubt expressed about the need for such policy updates. We respected their prudence and appreciated the healthy debate. Now we ask for the issue to be reconsidered – this time with additional facts. Please consider the following new information:

- Today there are more governmental entities in South Dakota with expanded non-discrimination policies than there were a year ago -- and their experience is informative. Since early 2009 when City Council last discussed this issue, the Counties of Clay and Shannon as well as the School Districts of Vermillion and Rapid City have expanded their policy. They have joined the list of others that expanded their policies prior to 2009, including the cities of Brookings.

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Vermillion and Lead; the county of Minnehaha; and the school districts of Sioux Falls, Pierre and Brookings. Add to this list all institutions of higher learning under the SD Board of Regents. All of these entities can provide data to refute the notion that liabilities have resulted from an inclusive policy. To the contrary, they can testify that the good produced by reaffirming their commitment to non-discrimination outweighs the risks. They can also testify to the fact that such a policy does not obligate them to offer benefits to domestic partners or to cover sex change operations. Surely, Rapid City can derive comfort from this.

- The National League of Cities' model EOE policy, included in their manual, includes sexual orientation. It was last updated in September of 2004 and recently shared with us in answer to our inquiry. You may obtain a copy directly from them by writing to hardwick@nlc.org.
- In looking at the experience of a large city in a neighboring state, Mayor Mike Fahey signed an executive order in 2002 adding sexual orientation to the City of Omaha's non-discrimination policy for City employees. We reached out to Omaha's Director of Human Resources to see if any negative consequences resulted. Attached is a letter from Mayor Jim Suttle's office sharing that the policy has had no unanticipated negative consequences. A copy of the Executive Order is attached to that letter.
- Recent Federal courts have found that discrimination carried out by municipalities, school districts and other governmental agencies directed against persons because of the sexual orientation and gender identity are prohibited. (see Weaver v. Nebo School District and Schroer v. Billington). This would suggest that the City can be proactive in its response to potential liability by adding such language to its employment policy thus putting hiring and firing managers on notice that discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity are not tolerated and lowering potential liability.
- An overwhelming majority of registered voters in South Dakota agree with our request, according to a scientific poll conducted by Robinson & Muenster Associates in December of 2009. The poll found that 83% believe that when it comes to employment, everyone should be treated equally regardless of sexual orientation and gender identity.
- A recent study conducted by the Williams Institute (see page 3 of the attached report) documents that gay employees in South Dakota earn substantially less than heterosexual counterparts, even with higher levels of education. If you doubt there is a need for such a policy, consider this data. The report also substantiates our claim that adopting our model policy will not result in a flood of lawsuits.

Finally, I'd like to emphasize that expanding your non-discrimination policy is a no-cost way to market Rapid City as a welcoming, forward-thinking place. Such an image enhances your ability to attract businesses and talented workers, particularly young people. We very much look forward to your response.

Sincerely.

Karen Mudd

Vice Chair, Equality South Dakota

(605) 214-1299

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MAYOR'S OFFICE

CHAMPIONS OF WORKPLACE DIVERSITY

These 43 of the 50 largest employers in South Dakota have adopted nondiscrimination policies that include sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

(listed by size of SD workforce)

Sanford Health Wells Fargo Bank Citigroup John Morrell & Co. Star Mark Cabinetry South Dakota State University 3M Co. University of South Dakota Wal-Mart Sam's Club Larson Manufacturing Co. HSBC Card Svc. Midcontinent Communications Sanmina-SCI Corp Hy-Vee Food Stores Lewis Drug, Inc. CIGNA Tel-Drug Terex Target/Target National Bank Esurance JC Penney Wal-Mart SuperCenter South Dakota Achieve

Midland National Life Insurance Poet Lodge Net Entertainment Corp. Owest Communications United Parcel Service Casey's General Stores **CNA Surcty** SAPA Extrusions Inc. Wellmark Blue Cross Blue Shield Pepsi Co Bottling First Dakota National Bank Gehl Co. ADVANCE US Bank CCC Information Services Best Buy Walgreens SESDAC, Inc. Black Hills Orthopedic Institute Home Depot

eTelecare Global Solutions

Equality South Dakota was formed in 2007. Our over 4,000 members are committed to our mission to secure and protect the rights and well-being of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender South Dakotans and their families through education and advocacy. In 2009, we launched our Workplace Diversity Project, which seeks to encourage employers to adopt non-discrimination policies that include sexual orientation and gender identity/expression.

We would love to add your company to our list. Contact info@egsd.org for more details.

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APR **09** 2010

Human Resources Department

Omaha/Douglas Civic Center 1819 Farnam Street, Suite506 Omaha, Nebraska 68183-0506 (402) 444-5300 FAX (402) 444-5314 FAX (402) 444-5317

MAYOR'S OFFICE

January 29, 2010

Karen Mudd Equality South Dakota

Dear Karen:

I am sorry I have not responded to you sooner but I have been as busy as I have ever been. You and I have had the opportunity to talk several times regarding our City policy F-2-02, attached to this letter.

As you know, that policy states the City of Omaha's commitment to treating "all people fairly. Discrimination due to race, creed, color, religion, political affiliation, sex, sexual orientation . . . will not be tolerated."

This policy has been in effect since 2002.

We have used this policy before in investigations involving the prohibited practices. To date, I can find no litigation or threatened litigation regarding sexual orientation. We do have EEOC litigation regarding allegations of other types of discrimination based upon state and federal statutes, but none involving sexual orientation.

If you need any further assistance, please let me know.

Sincerely,

Thomas C. Marfisi

Labor Relations Director

(402) 444-5974

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. F-2-02

CITY OF OMAHA STATEMENT OF ZERO TOLERANCE FOR RACISM AND DISCRIMINATION

PURPOSE:

To ensure that the City of Omaha is committed to treating all employees, customers, and the citizens we serve with respect and fairness without the biases of racism or discrimination.

STATEMENT:

The City of Omaha is committed to treating all people equally and fairly. Discrimination due to race, creed, color, religion, political affiliation, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, age, marital status, or disability will not be tolerated.

Therefore, I, Mike Fahey, as Mayor of Omaha, pledge to adopt and fulfill the City of Omaha Statement of Zero Tolerance for Racism and Discrimination, personally, and on behalf of all city departments by:

- ... ensuring equal opportunity in employment
- ...encouraging and valuing diversity by ensuring that all employees are given opportunities to reach their full potential
- ... supporting diversity programs and their effectiveness
- ...investigating and resolving diversity related issues in a timely manner
- ...treating all people the City of Omaha serves with respect and fairness.

Omaha is a pluralistic community. It is imperative that the City of Omaha reflect the diversity of the community it serves.

And, it is my hope that all organizations in the public and private sectors will embrace zero tolerance for racism and discrimination by adopting this statement as part of their commitment to this City.

BY THE POWER VESTED IN ME AS MAYOR BY SECTION 3.04 OF THE HOME RULE CHARTER OF THE CITY OF OMAHA 1956, AS AMENDED, I HEREBY PROCLAIM THIS TO BE THE EXECUTIVE ORDER ESTABLISHING AND GOVERNING THE CITY OF OMAHA STATEMENT OF ZERO TOLERANCE FOR RACISM AND DISCRIMINATION.

Executive order F-2-02 City of Omaha Statement of Zero Tolerance For Racism and Discrimination

WITNESS my hand as Mayor of the City of Omaha this 10th day of March, 2003.

Mike Fahey, Mayer

City of Omaha



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APR 09 2010

MAYOR'S OFFICE

Naomi G. Goldberg M.V. Lee Badgett Christopher Ramos

JANUARY 2010

The Impact of Employment Nondiscrimination Legislation in South Dakota

This report explores the issue of employment discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) citizens of South Dakota. We used the best available data from government sources and from recent research to examine the impact of employment discrimination on LGBT people and on South Dakota businesses.

Specifically this report concludes the following:

- As many as 12,400 gay, lesbian, and bisexual individuals live in South Dakota, and estimates
 suggest that 2,000 transgender individuals live in South Dakota. LGBT South Dakotans are racially
 and ethnically diverse, live throughout the state, and actively participate in the economy.
- Across a number of surveys, large percentages of LGBT people report discrimination and harassment in the workplace.
- According to Census Bureau data, South Dakotans in same-sex couples are 15% less likely to be employed than those in different sex married couples.
- Those that are employed earn substantially less money than their different-sex married counterparts: men in same-sex couples in South Dakota earn one-third less, while partnered lesbian earn just half that of married women.
- Employment discrimination hurts businesses. When LGBT employees fear discrimination in the workplace, they hide their identity, have less job satisfaction, and are less productive.
- Nondiscrimination laws protect employees and assist businesses in recruiting and retaining employees. A number of South Dakota's largest employers, including Sanford Health, Larson Manufacturing, and 3M, have already adopted such policies.
- Data collected from states that have already adopted non-discrimination laws protecting LGBT employees show that such laws do not overwhelm enforcement agencies or courts.

The Impact of Employment Nondiscrimination Legislation in South Dakota

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Estimates of the LGBT Population in South Dakota

Data from the US Census and the National Survey of Family Growth suggest that approximately 12,400 gay, lesbian, and bisexual individuals live in South Dakota. While exact estimates of the transgender population are difficult to obtain, some studies suggest that 0.25% of the population identifies as transgender. Using that figure, there may be as many as 2,000 transgender individuals living in South Dakota. Data suggest that the LGBT people in South Dakota are racially and ethnically diverse, live throughout the state, and actively participate in South Dakota's economy.

Many LGBT People Experience Employment Discrimination

Evidence of employment discrimination faced by LGBT people may be found in several forms. First, on surveys, LGBT employees and their non-LGBT coworkers may report experiences of employment discrimination. Second, LGBT employees may be underemployed or paid less than non-LGBT employees, despite having similar qualifications and experience. Data collected by government agencies also show that substantial numbers of LGB people report employment discrimination. In total, current research and surveys of employees from around the country indicate that many LGBT people experience various forms of employment discrimination.

Reporting of Discrimination on Surveys: On a national level, a large body of research finds that many LGBT people report experiences of discrimination in the workplace. Fifteen studies conducted since the mid-1990s have found that 15-43% of LGBT respondents experienced discrimination in the workplace. For example, a

2007 survey found that 16% of lesbians and gay men and 5% of bisexual people reported being fired or denied a job because of their sexual orientation. S Numerous local community surveys of LGBT people find that sexual orientation discrimination is also commonly reported in those areas. 6

The 2008 General Social Survey, which is a national survey, included questions about discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. This survey found that 37% of gay and lesbian people reported workplace harassment in the last five years, and 12% reported losing a job because of their sexual orientation.⁷

There are fewer surveys about the workplace experiences of transgender people. However, eleven recent local surveys of transgender people have found that at least 20% and as many as 57% reported having experienced some form of employment discrimination. Most recently, a 2009 survey of transgender people living in California found that 67% reported experiences with workplace harassment or discrimination directly related to their gender identity.

Because every survey of LGBT people finds evidence of discrimination, regardless of the specific place studied, we believe that discrimination against LGBT people in South Dakota is also likely to occur, even though there are few surveys specifically of South Dakota residents. A South Dakota School of Mines campus climate survey found that only 39% of faculty and staff somewhat or strongly agreed that the School was welcoming to LGB faculty, and only 40% agreed that the School was welcoming to LGB staff. ¹⁰

LGBT People are Often Underemployed and Underpaid: Very little research on discrimination against LGBT people in South Dakota exists. However, data from the US Census allows us to examine individuals in same-sex couples who live in South Dakota. While it isn't possible to identify single LGBT people on the Census, a large body of

research has relied upon Census data to provide a demographic picture of individuals living in same-sex couples.

The picture that emerges from Census data is that South Dakotans who live in same-sex couples are less likely to be employed and earn less than married different-sex couples despite higher levels of education. Such findings are likely to be related to discrimination faced by LGBT people. For example, data from the 2000 Census show that South Dakotans in same-sex couples are less likely to be employed full-time when compared to married individuals (62% versus 71%).

Additionally, when individuals in same-sex couples work, their annual earnings are significantly lower than those of married individuals. On average, men in same-sex couples in South Dakota earn \$24,551 each year, significantly less than the \$37,248 average earnings for married men. Women in same-sex couples also earn significantly less than married women (\$9,980 versus \$20,015). These lower wages exist despite the fact that individuals in same-sex couples are more likely to have a college degree than are married individuals, a comparison that supports the possibility of unequal treatment of people in same-sex couples by employers.

These findings are not unique to South Dakota. Analyses of national data consistently find that men in same-sex couples and men who identify as gay earn 10-32% less than similarly qualified heterosexual men. ¹¹ Surveys of transgender people find that they have high rates of unemployment and very low earnings. ¹² An unpublished study suggests that in those states that implement nondiscrimination laws, the wage gap for gay men lessens, suggesting that such laws curb discrimination against LGBT people. ¹³

Filing Complaints of Discrimination with State Agencies: Evidence of employment discrimination against LGBT employees is found by examining the filing of complaints with state agencies. Currently, 20 states prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, and of those, 13 also prohibit discrimination based on gender

identity. A 2008 study examined complaints filed by employees in these states and found that sexual orientation discrimination laws were used at similar frequencies by LGB workers as were sex discrimination laws by female workers. ¹⁴ Both LGB employees and women filed complaints at a rate of 5 complaints per 10,000 workers in those groups. Race complaints were filed at a slightly higher rate of 7 complaints per 10,000 workers who are people of color.

Effects of Nondiscrimination Laws on Businesses and Other Employers

In South Dakota, South Dakota State University, the University of South Dakota, the cities of Brookings, Lead, and Vermillion, Minnehaha County, Clay County, and Shannon County have implemented policies that prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and/or gender identity. School districts in Sioux Falls, Pierre, Brookings, and Vermillion have also implemented policies that prohibit sexual orientation discrimination. Additionally, 80% of the 50 largest employers in South Dakota have policies that prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity, including Sanford Health, Larson Manufacturing Company, HSBC Card Services, and 3M Company. 15

These South Dakota employers are adopting nondiscrimination policies that place them in the mainstream of corporate practice in the United States. More than two-thirds of Fortune 1000 companies prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, and one quarter prohibit discrimination on the basis of gender identity.

The widespread adoption of these policies suggests that nondiscrimination policies make good business sense. Nondiscrimination policies increase the ability to recruit and retain qualified employees and can improve the productivity and satisfaction of employees. Businesses are most successful when they can recruit, hire, and retain employees on the basis of talent, not personal characteristics that have no impact on an employee's ability to perform a job well.

Numerous studies from various academic disciplines suggest that LGBT workers will have greater job satisfaction and be more productive workers if they have legal protection from discrimination. The key link here is between discrimination and disclosure of one's sexual orientation or gender identity. Many studies have demonstrated that discrimination keeps LGBT workers from revealing their sexual orientation in the workplace. Although having experienced discrimination directly is a powerful reason for some to "stay in the closet," many studies show that LGBT people who fear discrimination are also less likely to reveal their sexual orientation to coworkers and supervisors.

Employers have a stake in these individual decisions, since disclosure has potentially positive benefits to LGBT workers' well-being and job performance. Studies find that people who have come out report lower levels of anxiety, less conflict between work and personal life, greater job satisfaction, more sharing of employers' goals, higher levels of satisfaction with their co-workers, more self-esteem, and better physical health.

On the flipside, when fear of discrimination causes LGBT employees to conceal their sexual orientation or gender identity, employers experience negative costs along with LGBT people themselves. The time as well as social and psychological energy that are required to maintain a hidden identity would, from an employer's perspective, be better used on the job.

A 2009 Human Rights Campaign survey provides recent evidence of the harmful impact of an unsupportive work environment on LGBT employees. The study finds that employees who are not out to anyone in the workplace were less productive, more distracted, and less likely to stay in their current positions. Specifically, when compared to more open employees, closeted employees were:

- More likely to report feeling depressed (44%) than were those employees who were out (26%);
- More likely to avoid a social work event (29%) than out employees (18%);

- More likely to report feeling distracted at work (31% versus 25%);
- More likely to feel exhausted (30% versus 12%); and
- More likely to have searched for another job (24% versus 16%).

Nondiscrimination policies can improve the workplace climate and influence choices about disclosure and concealment. Several studies have found higher levels of disclosure in workplaces when employers have their own non-discrimination policies that include sexual orientation.¹⁶

Nondiscrimination laws do not overwhelm enforcement agencies

Some question the increased burden on government agencies that a sexual orientation and gender identity anti-discrimination law may create. However, even if LGBT people filed complaints at the same rates that women file sex discrimination complaints or minorities file racial/ethnic discrimination complaints, government agencies would not be overwhelmed. A 2008 national study of data from 1999-2007 identified the average annual number of sexual orientation complaints for all states with LGBT protections at just over 1,200. versus race and sex complaints at 11,500 and 13,800, respectively. 17 This study estimated that for every 10,000 LGB workers, there are approximately 5 complaints filed on the basis of sexual orientation.

Using the earlier estimates of the number of LGB people living in South Dakota (12,400) and workforce statistics, we predict that in a given year, approximately 5 LGB workers per year would file a complaint alleging sexual orientation discrimination. The rate of 5 complaints per 10,000 workers does not include transgender employees, as necessary data was not available. However, the small size of the transgender population suggests that the number of complaints of gender identity would also be low, or approximately one complaint per year. Given these numbers, there is no evidence that expanding employment protections to include LGBT would encumber the services of existing agencies.

http://www.law.ucla.edu/williamsinstitute/publications/Bias%20in%20the%20Workplace.pdf

http://www.law.ucla.edu/williamsinstitute/publications/Bias%20in%20the%20Workplace.pdf

Analysis conducted by The Williams Institute, unpublished, 2009.

http://www.law.ucla.edu/williamsinstitute/publications/Bias%20in%20the%20Workplace.pdf

Transgender California Report," The Transgender Law Center, 2009, available here: http://www.transgenderlawcenter.org/pdf/StateTransCA_report_2009Print.pdf

¹ This estimate uses data from the 2005-2007 American Community Survey for the number of same-sex couples living in each state and then distributes the estimated 9 million Americans who identify as gay, lesbian or bisexual across the 50 states according to those figures. Similar methods may be found in Gates, G.J., "Same-sex Couples and the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual Population: New Estimates from the American Community Survey," The Williams Institute, October 2006, available here: http://www.law.ucla.edu/williamsinstitute/publications/SameSexCouplesandGLBpopACS.pdf

² "Transgender Population and the Number of Transgender Employees," The Human Rights Campaign, available here: http://www.hrc.org/issues/9598.htm

Romero, A.P., C.J. Rosky, M.V.L. Badgett, and G.J. Gates, "Census Snapshot: South Dakota," The Williams Institute, June 2008, available here: http://www.law.ucla.edu/williamsinstitute/publications/SouthDakotaCensusSnapshot.pdf

⁴ A comprehensive review of studies about employment discrimination may be found in Badgett, M.V.L, H. Lau, B. Sears, and D. Ho, "Bias in the Workplace: Consistent evidence of sexual orientation and gender identity discrimination," The Williams Institute, June 2007, available here:

⁵ Herek, Gregory M. 2007. "Hate Crimes and Stigma-Related Experiences Among Sexual Minority Adults in the United States: Prevalence Estimates from a National Probability Sample." Journal of Interpersonal Violence, forthcoming.

⁶ See Badgett, M.V.L, H. Lau, B. Sears, and D. Ho, "Bias in the Workplace: Consistent evidence of sexual orientation and gender identity discrimination," The Williams Institute, June 2007, available here:

⁸ Badgett, M.V.L, H. Lau, B. Sears, and D. Ho, "Bias in the Workplace: Consistent evidence of sexual orientation and gender identity discrimination," The Williams Institute, June 2007, available here:

⁹ "The State of Transgender California Report," The Transgender Law Center, 2009, available here: http://www.transgenderlawcenter.org/pdf/StateTransCA_report_2009Print.pdf

¹⁰ South Dakota School of Mines and Technology Campus Climate Survey, 2007, available here: http://sdmines.sdsmt.edu/cgi-bin/global/a bus card.cgi?SiteID=420466

Badgett, M.V.L, H. Lau, B. Sears, and D. Ho, "Bias in the Workplace: Consistent evidence of sexual orientation and gender identity discrimination," The Williams Institute, June 2007, available here: http://www.law.ucla.edu/williamsinstitute/publications/Bias%20in%20the%20Workplace.pdf

¹² See Badgett, M.V.L, H. Lau, B. Sears, and D. Ho, "Bias in the Workplace: Consistent evidence of sexual orientation and gender identity discrimination," The Williams Institute, June 2007, available here: http://www.law.ucla.edu/williamsinstitute/publications/Bias%20in%20the%20Workplace.pdf and "The State of

¹³ On file with the authors.

Ramos, C., M.V.L. Badgett, and B. Sears, "Evidence of Employment Discrimination on the Basis of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity: Complaints filed with state enforcement agencies, 1999-2007," The Williams Institute, November 2008, available here: http://www.law.ucla.edu/williamsinstitute/pdf/PACR.pdf

List complied by Equality South Dakota, available here: http://institute.egsd.org/news/hotornot.html

¹⁶ Burton, S. B., "Organizational efforts to affirm sexual diversity: A cross-level examination" Journal of Applied Psychology, 86(1), 17-28, 2001.

Ramos, C., M.V.L. Badgett, and B. Sears, "Evidence of Employment Discrimination on the Basis of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity: Complaints filed with state enforcement agencies, 1999-2007," The Williams Institute, November 2008, available here: http://www.law.ucla.edu/williamsinstitute/pdf/PACR.pdf

Naomi G. Goldberg, MPP, is the Peter J. Cooper Public Policy Fellow at the Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law. Her research interests focus on policies affecting families.

M.V. Lee Badgett, PhD, is the Research Director at the Williams Institute, and Director of the Center for Public Policy and Administration at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, where she is also a Professor of Economics. She studies family policy and employment discrimination related to sexual orientation.

Christopher Ramos is a Research Assistant at the Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law. He studies social inequality through a lens of race, class, gender, and sexual orientation.

ABOUT THE WILLIAMS INSTITUTE

The Williams Institute on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Law and Public Policy at UCLA School of Law advances law and public policy through rigorous, independent research and scholarship, and disseminates its work through a variety of education programs and media to judges, legislators, lawyers, other policymakers and the public. These studies can be accessed at the Williams Institute website.

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