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**Michigan Department of Civil Rights Statement on
Passing of Kalamazoo Ordinance 1856**

Lansing, MI – On November 3rd, voters in Kalamazoo passed City Ordinance No. 1856, an anti-discrimination ordinance protecting against discrimination based on actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, height, weight, marital status, physical or mental disability, family status, sexual orientation, or gender identity. Department of Civil Rights Director Kelvin W. Scott released the below statement today in response to the passing of that Ordinance and regarding the state's efforts to provide more comprehensive statewide protections against discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity or expression:

“On Tuesday, the voters in Kalamazoo faced a choice. They could either vote to uphold the insensitive and discriminatory traditions of the past, or they could vote to fully embrace the future of equal opportunity and diversity. The people of Kalamazoo can stand proud, knowing that overwhelmingly, they chose to focus on the future.

State legislators remain faced with a similar choice. Legislation has been introduced in the House (House Bill 4192) which would increase the protections of Michigan's Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act, otherwise one of the most comprehensive in the nation. Specifically, the

proposed legislation would amend the act to provide protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity or expression. I urge our legislators to follow the example already set in Kalamazoo, and indeed many other cities around the state. Now is the time for us to look forward, not back – and to embrace/protect all persons who wish to call Michigan home.”

For more information on the Michigan Department of Civil Rights, please visit <http://www.michigan.gov/mdcr>.

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