

**From:** [Donna Marcum](#)  
**To:** [MCRC-Comments](#)  
**Subject:** Civil right protections for LGBT  
**Date:** Monday, July 31, 2017 11:04:54 AM

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Civil Rights are human rights. LGBT people should not be discriminated against based on their sexual orientation or gender expression.

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

**From:** [Amy and Rob Buttery](#)  
**To:** [MCRC-Comments](#)  
**Subject:** Clarify Elliot-Larsen Act regarding LGBTQ protections  
**Date:** Monday, July 31, 2017 12:46:56 PM

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I submit this email as a public comment on the Elliott-Larsen Act.

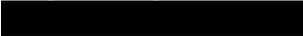
My 17-year-old daughter is successfully transitioning from male to female and has had great support from her high school, her credit union, the 36th District Court (where her petition for a name change was granted), and other contacts with the system. However, as she enters the work world and prepares to go to college, I am very concerned that the state of Michigan still does not explicitly protect her from discrimination based on her gender identity. I request that the Michigan Civil Rights Commission take action on anti-LGBTQ discrimination by finding that the state's existing prohibition on sex discrimination includes discrimination based on both sexual orientation and gender identity.

This approach and interpretation of anti-discrimination law has strong precedent. The federal Affordable Care Act prevents discrimination by health providers and insurance companies on the basis of sex, and in May 2016, the federal department of Health and Human Services' Office of Civil Rights issued a final ruling on Section 1557 of the ACA (See this ruling on the [Office of the Federal Register](#) website). The ruling specifically bans discrimination in most insurance coverage and the denial of health care on the basis of gender identity.

My plea for an update to the Elliott-Larsen Act is not a matter of "special" rights--just basic protections. As the mother of a young transgender woman, I hope you can imagine my fears and concerns when she presents herself as a woman in restaurants and other public spaces. As you may know, transgender people (particularly transgender women) are targeted in our society for hate crimes at an alarming rate. (For more information see this article from the Human Rights Commission on [Violence against the Transgender Community in 2017](#)). Your commission cannot of course protect my daughter from hate crimes, but you can send a message to Michigan citizens that the state treats transgender people as equal in every respect and protects their full rights regarding housing and employment. You will also be sending a strong message to the transgender men and women in our state that Michigan is a place to stay, attend college, join the work force, and thrive.

Please consider my urgent plea for your help guaranteeing legal protections for my daughter and the many valuable Michigan citizens who consider themselves transgender or gender variant. History has its eyes on you.

Amy Buttery

  
Lansing, MI 48911

**From:** [Robert Gillett](#)  
**To:** [MCRC-Comments](#)  
**Subject:** comment on Equity Michigan request for an interpretive statement  
**Date:** Monday, July 31, 2017 12:42:38 PM

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I'm responding to the MDCR invitation to comment on this request.

I am an attorney and serve as the executive director of the Michigan Advocacy Program (MAP), which provides free civil legal services to low income persons across Michigan. While MAP does not have a specific mission in LGBT advocacy, our lawyers represent hundreds of LGBT clients each year, including in cases where discrimination is an issue. Our internal program policy documents-- e.g., non-discrimination in services and employment-- prohibit discrimination based on gender identity and sexual orientation.

I've reviewed Ms. White's June 30 letter. I find it persuasive from a legal point of view-- as importantly, I believe that the MDCR moving in the this policy direction is critical to MDCR's role as a leader in and advocate for civil rights in Michigan.

While tremendous strides have been made in assuring legal equality for LGBT persons discrimination still exists. Adopting the proposed interpretive statement is an important step in creating an environment where all Michigianians feel valued, included and protected.

Thank you for your consideration of this important issue.

*Bob Gillett*  
*Executive Director*  
*Michigan Advocacy Program*



**From:** [mulvan20@msu.edu](mailto:mulvan20@msu.edu)  
**To:** [MCRC-Comments](#)  
**Subject:** ELCRA clarification comments  
**Date:** Saturday, August 5, 2017 12:44:29 PM

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I support the proposed amendments to include gender identity and sexual orientation in the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act. Having previously worked for a private-sector employer who offered full LGBTQ nondiscrimination protections, and now working for a private-sector employer who does not, the loss of those protections are striking in their effect on my attitude and my feeling of confidence and security in my job and with my coworkers. I have concerns about whether I should keep a wedding photo showing myself and my wife on my desk - will people walking by or stopping at my desk have a problem with it? Where on my desk should I place it so it is least prominent, and therefore least offensive? Will my sexual orientation ever be a factor in downsizing, ability to receive promotions, or in pay/compensation decisions? If I ever face overt discrimination related to my sexual orientation, will I be told by H.R. that there's nothing they can do? Will I be encouraged to leave the company for gayer pastures? Having employment protections that cover sexual orientation and gender identity doesn't make LGBTQ people more in-your-face about their identities, it just makes them less scared of people who already don't respect their identities.

With regard to the overall impact to the state this amendment may have, I know many talented and exceptional people who left the state to attend college, or left the state after college, or left the state before their gender transitions because Michigan is seen, *de jure* and *de facto*, as unfriendly to and unaccepting of the LGBTQ community. When talented young people choose to leave the state, our economy suffers and family structures weaken. And frankly, I think these criticisms are warranted. I have no doubt that if the Supreme Court had not voted for marriage equality, I could not have married my wife in this state in 2016. Today, our ability to do everything from finding housing to keeping our jobs to being recognized as next of kin in emergency situations depends on the policies of private companies, the attitudes of people we encounter, and our own silent beacons of appeal for respect, inclusion, and basic kindness in every aspect of our lives. I look forward to a day when I will not feel like an LGBTQ person trying to live in Michigan, and will instead just feel like a Michigander.

Thank you for your consideration of this important - and necessary - change to the Civil Rights Act.

Megan Mulvaney

  
Resident of Ferndale, MI

**From:** [Anne Mulder](#)  
**To:** [MCRC-Comments](#)  
**Subject:** Elliot Larson Civil Rights Act  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 1, 2017 1:46:53 PM

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All Michiganders should be treated fairly and equally. Please find that protections from sex discrimination in the ELCRA also encompass discrimination based on both sexual orientation and gender identity. There is good precedent to interpret it this way, and more importantly, it is the right thing to do!

**From:** [Katie Lamb](#)  
**To:** [MCRC-Comments](#)  
**Subject:** Elliot-Larsen Civil Right Act  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 1, 2017 10:36:32 AM

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Hello,

As an LGBTQ resident of Michigan and board member of the local GLSEN chapter, I believe that LGBTQ Michiganders should have the same protection from discrimination that are available to other Michiganders. There are many vulnerable populations even among the LGBTQ umbrella, including homeless youth, trans folks, older adults, and more. It's time for Michigan to protect the lives and well-being of all Michiganders by ensuring the Elliot-Larsen Civil Right Act includes protecting people on the basis of actual or perceived gender identity/expression and sexual orientation.

Thank you for your time!

Katie Lamb  
she/her/hers  
Sign up for GLSEN Southeast Michigan's newsletter [here!](#)  
Donate to our chapter [here!](#)

**From:** [Kevin](#)  
**To:** [MCRC-Comments](#)  
**Subject:** Elliott Larsen  
**Date:** Wednesday, August 2, 2017 8:51:19 PM

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Sirs;

I believe that the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act (ELCRA) includes protection against discrimination on the basis of gender identity and sexual orientation. Clearly those are sexuality based human conditions and this clearly protected.

Respectfully,

Kevin Mark Rooker

  
Saginaw Mi 48607

**From:** Lyndi Johnston  
**To:** MCRC-Comments  
**Subject:** Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act input  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 1, 2017 3:46:14 PM

To the Michigan Civil Rights Commission

This is in response to your call for input

I believe you should issue an interpretive statement to clarify that the prohibition against sex discrimination in the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act includes protection against discrimination on the basis of gender identity and sexual orientation.

Thank you  
Lyndi Johnston

Detroit, MI 48221

**From:** [Shannon Cunningham](#)  
**To:** [MCRC-Comments](#)  
**Subject:** Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act  
**Date:** Wednesday, August 2, 2017 4:06:46 PM

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Dear Commissioners,

I write to you today regarding the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act and the importance of adding an amendment that protects against discrimination on the basis of gender identity and sexual orientation.

Aside from the fact that it is abhorrent that we are still allowing this discrimination to occur, we are citizens of a country that was supposedly built upon providing "liberty and justice for all" - *for all*. **All**.

I understand that the Act also protects "religious freedoms," but there is a very distinct difference between religious freedoms and straightforward discrimination, which is obviously practiced when employers and landlords are able to turn people away because of their gender and/or sexual orientation.

Refusing to add the amendment maintains an archaic and discriminatory way of thinking, acting and living in place. As a resident of the state of Michigan, I demand that all residents be provided the same right - the right to pursue and enjoy any job and housing of his or her liking, regardless of gender and/or sexual orientation.

Best,

Shannon Cunningham

**From:** [Deborah DeLage](#)  
**To:** [MCRC-Comments](#)  
**Subject:** EQMI request  
**Date:** Sunday, July 30, 2017 7:52:27 PM

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I am writing in agreement with Equality Michigan's request that MCRC issue an interpretative statement that clarifies the prohibition of sex discrimination in the ELCRA includes protection against discrimination on the basis of gender identity and sexual orientation. This clarification is necessary to end the discrimination against the LGBTQ community in housing, jobs, services, and shelter.

Sincerely,  
Deborah DeLage  
Dearborn, MI

"Be the change you wish to see in the world." Gandhi

**From:** [luis saenz](#)  
**To:** [MCRC-Comments](#)  
**Subject:** Equality for ALL in Michigan  
**Date:** Friday, August 4, 2017 8:24:52 AM

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I strongly urge the Michigan Civil Rights Commission, pursuant to its authority to interpret the Elliott Larsen Civil Rights Act to issue an interpretative statement finding that it is unlawful sex discrimination to discriminate in employment, housing, or public accommodations based on an individual's gender identity or sexual orientation.

Luis Saenz

**From:** [Max Thome](#)  
**To:** [MCRC-Comments](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Civil rights  
**Date:** Thursday, August 3, 2017 2:13:29 PM

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Dear Civil Rights Commissioners:

On behalf of the 24,000+ social workers in Michigan and their clients, the National Association of Social Workers - Michigan Chapter would like to state unequivocal support for Equality Michigan's request that the Michigan Civil Rights Commission address anti-LGBTQ discrimination with an interpretive statement. By the Commission's own admission, discrimination against LGBTQ persons "exists and is significant" in the state of Michigan. As the legislature has thus far failed to act to protect these persons, there is a question as to whether it is legal to discriminate against LGBTQ people. This is unacceptable. Legal precedent has already been established in federal district and appeals courts that prohibition against sex discrimination includes discrimination on the basis on sexual orientation or gender identity. The Michigan Civil Rights Commission should take a clear stand with an interpretive statement, thereby addressing any legal ambiguity, to affirm the civil rights of LGBTQ people as being protected under the law.

LGBTQ persons experience dismissal from jobs, eviction from housing, and denial of service from medical professionals due to their sexual orientation and/or gender identity, and this significantly impacts their access to healthcare and other necessary social services. There is a strong and growing body of evidence indicating that minority stress also contributes to mental health concerns in the LGBTQ population. Without legal protections, this vulnerable population has little to no recourse when faced with discrimination, contributing to rates of depression, anxiety, posttraumatic stress disorder, and attempted suicide. Protecting the rights of LGBTQ people isn't just a question of equality, it is also a question of social welfare and public health. Civil rights for all persons must be protected under the law, and an interpretive statement from the Michigan Civil Rights Commission affirming protections for LGBTQ people would be a significant step towards safeguarding civil rights in our state.

Thank you for the work you do protecting the civil rights of Michigan citizens.

Sincerely,

Maxine Thome PhD, LMSW, ACSW, MPH  
Executive Director  
National Association of Social Workers-Michigan Chapter  
[REDACTED]  
Lansing, MI 48910  
  
[REDACTED]

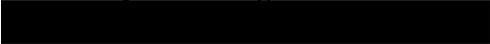
**From:** [Anna Hall](#)  
**To:** [MCRC-Comments](#)  
**Subject:** Interpretation of Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 1, 2017 3:41:57 PM

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Dear Commission members,

I am writing to urge you to issue a statement interpreting the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act as including protections against discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. Because the Act already proscribes sex discrimination, it can be construed to apply to sexual orientation and gender identity discrimination. Such an interpretive statement is consistent with federal court rulings on federal civil rights laws. More importantly, a statement from the Commission on the issue sends a clear message that Michigan is a state where all people are treated equally under the law.

Sincerely,

Anna N. Hall  
J.D. Candidate, May 2019  
University of Michigan Law School  


**From:** [REDACTED] [Jack Ridl](#)  
**To:** [MCRC-Comments](#)  
**Subject:** LGBTQ  
**Date:** Sunday, July 30, 2017 1:57:40 PM

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Dear MCRC,

All Michiganders should be treated fairly and equally. Please find that protections from sex discrimination in the ELCRA also encompass discrimination based on both sexual orientation and gender identity.

Thank you for all you for all of us.  
Jack Ridl  
Douglas, Michigan

**From:** [John Eynon](#)  
**To:** [MCRC-Comments](#)  
**Subject:** Please amend ELCRA  
**Date:** Monday, July 31, 2017 4:39:18 PM

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To whom it may concern:

My name is John Eynon. I'm a resident of Michigan since 1996, a Veteran, and I currently manage a Department of Labor program that helps hundreds of Veterans across the state find gainful employment. I am also a happily married gay man. I'm obviously in favor of amending the Elliot-Larsen Civil Rights Act to include gender identity and sexual orientation. I'd like to take a moment to discuss the worries my husband and I have to consider on a daily basis.

Either of could as a result of being gay:

1. be fired from our jobs
2. be evicted from our home
3. be denied a rental
4. be denied service
5. be refused visitation rights at a hospital

This is on top of the everyday stresses of living, paying bills, etc. It's stress that frankly neither of us want or need. Most people don't have a problem with gay people. I'd say on any given day 90%+ of my interactions are with people who either support my lifestyle or don't have a strong opinion either way. What I would like is protection from that small minority who would try to oppress or insult my dignity as a human being. Several years ago, my grandmother passed away. She supported me 100% and was absolutely thrilled that I had found someone to spend my life with. She wanted to be at our wedding. As she lay dying, a nurse berated me in front of her and my family for not living in accordance with "God's plan" and that I was living a life of sin and she would pray for me. My family was mortified and I hope to god that wasn't one of the things my grandmother heard before passing away. Would an amended civil rights law change what happened? It might not have, but it would have potentially given me a legal remedy to an extremely traumatic situation.

Governor Snyder has said that he wants young people to stay in Michigan. I'm a Veteran with a Master's Degree who is currently working on making Michigan a better place to live. My husband is working towards finishing his degree. We both like Michigan and plan to buy a house in Lansing soon, however, being treated with basic human dignity is important to both of us. I can't say that we might decide to relocate to a more progressive state in the future.

Thank you for your time,

John J Eynon

**From:** [Janelle Henley-Wild](#)  
**To:** [MCRC-Comments](#)  
**Subject:** Please  
**Date:** Monday, July 31, 2017 6:22:21 PM

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Please allow equality I this United States and stop bigotry.....period.

**From:** [stuartbarbier@charter.net](mailto:stuartbarbier@charter.net)  
**To:** [MCRC-Comments](#)  
**Subject:** Public comment on scope of sex discrimination prohibited under the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act  
**Date:** Thursday, August 3, 2017 12:07:38 PM

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Dear Commissioners:

I strongly support Equality Michigan's request that the Michigan Civil Rights Commission "issue an interpretive statement to clarify that the prohibition against sex discrimination in the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act (ELCRA) includes protection against discrimination on the basis of gender identity and sexual orientation."

Gender identity and sexual orientation are frequent targets of discrimination, as numerous studies show (a Google search on "sexual orientation and gender identity discrimination studies" produces over 800,000 results). Explicitly including these terms in ELCRA would at least provide some recourse to those who experience such discrimination. Also, to not include them doesn't make sense to me, since discriminating against someone who is female, for example, is no different from discriminating against someone who is gay, for example. Both are wrong, and to prohibit one but not the other seems contradictory. Laws should not contradict themselves.

Please agree to Equality Michigan's request.

Sincerely,

Stuart Barbier, Ph.D.

Bay City, Michigan

**From:** [Fiona Carmody](#)  
**To:** [MCRC-Comments](#)  
**Subject:** Public Comment  
**Date:** Wednesday, August 2, 2017 10:39:57 AM

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To Whom It May Concern,

Please issue an interpretative statement that says the prohibition against sex discrimination in the civil rights act includes protections against discrimination based on gender identity and sexual orientation. This is very important to members of our community, who need to be supported by their government when the federal government is so unresponsive to such important issues.

Thank you,

Fiona

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Fiona Carmody  
J.D. Candidate, December 2017  
Associate Editor, *Michigan Journal of Gender and Law*  
University of Michigan Law School



**From:** [Hope Remains](#)  
**To:** [MCRC-Comments](#)  
**Subject:** Re: ELCRA  
**Date:** Wednesday, August 2, 2017 9:33:14 PM

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There are many LGBT citizens in Michigan. They pay the same taxes as other citizens. But historically, they have not enjoyed equal rights and protections under the law. Up until recently, we saw that beginning to change for the better. But now the tide has begun to reverse. Recently, the US Justice Department indicated that there is no protection in employment for LGBT people. This makes it all the more imperative that States fill the gap and provide protections. All citizens, regardless of race, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation or gender identity, need to be equally protected under the law. If the rights of any citizen are not safe, nobody's rights are safe.

(Rev.) William H. Carey  
[REDACTED]  
Ferndale, MI 48220

[REDACTED]

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**William H. Carey**  
[about.me/WilliamHCarey](http://about.me/WilliamHCarey)

**From:** [Lisa Goyette](#)  
**To:** [MCRC-Comments](#)  
**Subject:** Request for Interpretative Statement  
**Date:** Monday, July 31, 2017 8:29:15 PM

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In accordance with Equality Michigan's letter to Michigan Civil Rights Commission, dated 30 June 2017 as sent to Co-Chairs Laura Reyes Kopack and Rasha Demashkieh I am in support of their request that:

The Michigan Civil Rights Commission("Commission") issue an interpretative statement finding that the prohibition on sex discrimination in employment, housing, and public accommodations found in Michigan's Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act ("Elliott-Larsen"), MCL 37.2101 *et seq.*, includes a prohibition on discrimination based on an individual's gender identity and sexual orientation. The Commission has the authority to issue such a statement under MCL 37.2601; MCL 24.201 *et seq.*; Mich Admin Code, R 37.23.

This statement is needed due to the significant number of discriminatory actions occurring against the LGBTQ community.

Sincerely,

Lisa Goyette

From: [Jeff Baker](#)

To: [MCRC-Comments@michigan.gov](mailto:MCRC-Comments@michigan.gov)

Monday, August 7

The traditional belief that there are only 2 sexes (male and female) has been proven wrong by science. If someone is discriminated against for being gay, that is sexual discrimination. Title VII protects all regardless of sexual identity.

Oscar Baker of Delta Township, Lansing, Michigan 48917