



March 14, 2019

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable David Cicilline
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Rep. Cicilline:

On behalf of the American College of Physicians (ACP), I am writing to express our strong support for the Equality Act of 2019, H.R. 5. We appreciate your leadership and efforts to ensure that all Americans have the same access to employment, education, housing, and federal funding opportunities without the fear of discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity.

The American College of Physicians is the largest medical specialty organization and the second largest physician group in the United States. ACP members include 154,000 internal medicine physicians (internists), related subspecialists, and medical students. Internal medicine physicians are specialists who apply scientific knowledge and clinical expertise to the diagnosis, treatment, and compassionate care of adults across the spectrum from health to complex illness.

The lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) community faces a common set of challenges both within and outside the health care system. Within the health care system, these challenges range from access to health care coverage and culturally competent care to state and federal policies that reinforce social stigma, marginalization, or discrimination. In addition, various state or federal laws not directly related to health care policy, such as employment, education, and housing policies, may affect the quality of life of LGBT persons and which can impact their physical and mental health. In its paper, "[Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Health Disparities: A Policy Position Paper from the American College of Physicians](#)," ACP reaffirms its long-standing commitment to improving the health of all Americans and opposes any form of discrimination in the delivery of health care services. The College also offers recommendations to eliminate health disparities for LGBT individuals in the health care system, including training physicians to be culturally and clinically competent in LGBT health care, advocating for practical health policies supported by empirical research, and working to eliminate laws that discriminate against the LGBT community and their families.

The Equity Act would affirm and extend the explicit prohibition of discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity under federal civil rights law to education, employment, housing, credit, federal jury service, public accommodations, and federal funding. These are the

same nondiscrimination protections that are already available to other protected classes. Inclusive policies such as this legislation will enhance the health and well-being of LGBT individuals, their families, and communities by ensuring that nondiscrimination policies are in place across the spectrum of policy areas that affect the daily lives of Americans.

We applaud your commitment to federal nondiscrimination policies for LGBT persons and stand ready to work with you as you advance the Equality Act through the 116th Congress.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ana María López".

Ana María López, MD, MPH, MACP
President