March 27, 2023

Dear Representatives,

The undersigned organizations representing lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex (LGBTQI) people write in support of the Women's Health Protection Act (WHPA). Our organizations, representing millions of LGBTQI people across this country, support access to the full range of reproductive health care, including abortion, which is vital to the health, safety and lives of our diverse communities. We know that the harm from the continued erosion of reproductive rights falls hardest on those who experience health disparities due to social, political, and environmental inequities, including LGBTQI people, people with low incomes, Black, Indigenous, and People of Color, immigrants, young people, people with disabilities, and those living in rural and other medically underserved areas.

Being able to decide whether and when to have a child is essential to the dignity and equality of all people. In 1973 in *Roe v. Wade*, the Supreme Court recognized as a constitutional right what must be true in any free society: it is up to the individual, not to the government or any third party, to make intensely personal decisions about childbearing and abortion. With the shocking overturning of *Roe* last year having decimated abortion access across the nation, the stakes could not be higher.

Even before this catastrophic reversal, access to abortion had been curtailed in ways that severely exacerbated economic and social inequality. Those with Medicaid and other government-sponsored health insurance had their ability to obtain affordable abortion care stripped away not long after *Roe* was decided. And draconian state regulations that serve no legitimate medical purpose, combined with violence and harassment by anti-abortion forces, have reduced the number of abortion providers across the country so that even those with means often have difficulty finding a place to obtain the care they need.

There are many reasons that our organizations, representing millions of LGBTQI people across this country, support passage of the Women's Health Protection Act. First, many queer-identified and transgender people can and do become pregnant, and some will need abortion care if they face an unwanted pregnancy. The Women's Health Protection Act will ensure that unwarranted restrictions do not stand in the way of that care. Second, many abortion and family planning clinics have expanded their services and become trusted providers of reproductive and other medical care to LGBTQ people, offering affirming, judgment-free care to members of this community, many of whom would otherwise go without due to discrimination and mistreatment in the larger health care arena. Third, the movements for reproductive freedom and LGBTQI equality share the fundamental goal of control over our own bodies – the freedom to decide whether to become or remain pregnant, whether and with whom to have intimate relationships, and whether to seek medical care to help our bodies align with our gender identities. The Women's Health Protection Act will ensure that health care providers are able to continue helping their patients receive the medically necessary care that they need to further their health, dignity and well-being. Fourth, abortion restrictions are a form of sex discrimination, a persistent scourge that harms all women, including LBTQ women, as well as non-binary people and GBTQ men.

Finally, our community has a deep interest in exposing the false "health and safety" premise upon which these politically motivated abortion restrictions are based. Today, we are witnessing cruel attempts by state legislators to bar medical professionals from providing care to transgender youth, despite the overwhelming consensus of the medical profession that such care is medically necessary. The policymakers pushing restriction after restriction on abortion care similarly ignore the evidence of the safety of abortion and the informed opinion of the medical profession when they enact sham "health and safety" measures that they claim protect patients but in fact do the opposite by reducing access.

We need Congress to act. WHPA establishes a statutory right for health care providers to provide, and their patients to receive, abortion care without medically unnecessary restrictions, limitations, and bans that single out abortion and impede access to care. The bill would put a stop to harmful restrictions and bans, and it would protect the right to access abortion care for all, no matter where someone happens to live.

This will be a pivotal year in the battle to ensure the right to reproductive autonomy. With the Supreme Court having stripped away this fundamental right, it is up to Congress to step in. We urge the House to pass the Women's Health Protection Act.

Sincerely,

National Center for Lesbian Rights

Joined by

Affirmations

Athlete Ally

Bradbury-Sullivan LGBT Center

Brave Space Alliance

CA LGBTQ Health and Human Services Network

CenterLink: The Community of LGBT Centers

Charlotte Trans Health

Colors+

Equality California

Equality Community Center

Family Equality

FORGE, Inc.

GenderNexus

GLBTQ Legal Advocates & Defenders

GLMA: Health Professionals Advancing LGBTQ+ Equality

Great Lakes Bay Pride

Guilford Green Foundation & LGBTQ Center

Hudson Pride Center

Hugh Lane Wellness Foundation

Human Rights Campaign

inclusion tennessee

interACT: Advocates for Intersex Youth

Lambda Legal

Lexington Pride Center

LGBT Center of Greater Reading

LGBT Center of Raleigh

LGBT Center of SE Wisconsin

LGNTQ+ Community Center of Southern Nevada

Los Angeles LGBT Center

Movement Advancement Project

Muncie OUTreach LGBTQ+ Center

Naples Pride

National LGBT Cancer Network

National LGBTQ Task Force

National LGBTQ+ Bar Association

Oasis Legal Services

One In Long Beach, Inc

Our Family Coalition

OutCenter Southwest Michigan

Pride Center of Staten Island

Pride Center of Terre Haute Inc.

Rainbow Rose Center

Resource Center

Seacoast Outright

SF LGBT Center

Silver State Equality-Nevada

SMYAL

SOJOURN: the Southern Jewish Resource Network for Gender & Sexual Diversity

St. Louis Queer+ Support Helpline

Stand with Trans

The Atlanta Pride Committee

The LGBTQ Community Center of the Desert

The LOFT LGBTQ+ Community Center

Unity House at Kenyon College

Waves Ahead Corp

We Are Family