

March 12, 2017

Dear President Emmert & NCAA Governance:

On behalf of the undersigned, the Human Rights Campaign and Athlete Ally strongly encourage the NCAA to reaffirm its commitment to operating championships and events that are safe, healthy, and free from discrimination; and are held in sites where the dignity of everyone involved -- from athletes and coaches, to students and workers -- is assured.

The NCAA has already demonstrated its commitment to ensuring safe and inclusive events. In response to state legislatures passing laws targeting LGBTQ people, the NCAA required that bidders seeking to host tournaments or events demonstrate how they will ensure the safety of all participants and spectators, and protect them from discrimination. Based on the new guidelines, the NCAA relocated events scheduled to be held in North Carolina due to the state's discriminatory HB2 law.

We commend these previous actions. With the next round of site selections underway, we urge the NCAA to reaffirm these previous commitments to nondiscrimination and inclusion by avoiding venues that are inherently unwelcoming and unsafe for LGBTQ people.

Such locations include:

- **Venues in cities or states with laws that sanction discrimination against LGBTQ people in goods, services and/or public accommodations;**
- **Venues in cities and/or states that prevent transgender people from using the bathroom and/or locker room consistent with their gender identity;<sup>1</sup>**
- **Venues at schools that request Title IX exemptions to discriminate against students based on their sexual orientation and/or gender identity; and**
- **Venues in states that preempt or override local nondiscrimination protections for LGBTQ people.**

The presence of even one of these factors would irreparably undermine the NCAA's ability to ensure the health, safety and dignity of event participants. The discriminatory impact of these factors cannot be managed or overcome. Consequently, such venues should be avoided.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This practice is also inconsistent to the NCAA's best practices on transgender inclusion.

<sup>2</sup> For similar reasons, the NCAA already prohibits championships events with predetermined sites in states where governments display the Confederate battle flag, and prohibits NCAA members from hosting championships events if their school nicknames use Native American imagery that is considered abusive and offensive.



The best way to ensure that LGBTQ people associated with an NCAA event are treated with dignity and respect -- whether they are working, playing or cheering -- is to prioritize venues in locations with LGBTQ protections, and avoid those that explicitly discriminate against people based on their sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

We urge the NCAA to reaffirm during its selection process its proven commitments to inclusion and equality. And we encourage the NCAA to explore additional steps to continue to create welcoming championship environments.<sup>3</sup>

Please feel free to reach out to us with any questions. We stand ready to support the work ahead to assure NCAA championships and events are safe and inclusive for all.

Sincerely,

American Civil Liberties Union  
Athlete Ally  
Bradbury-Sullivan LGBT Community Center  
CampusPride  
The CARE Center  
CenterLink  
The Central Adirondack Partnership  
Citizen Action of NY, Hudson Valley  
Civicorps  
Equality Alabama  
Equality California  
Equality Federation  
Equality Florida  
Equality Michigan  
Equality NC  
Equality New York  
Equality Texas  
Freedom Center for Social Justice  
Freestate Justice  
The Gay and Lesbian Center of Southern Nevada  
Gender Equality New York  
Genders & Sexualities Alliance Network (GSA Network)  
Georgia Equality

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<sup>3</sup> See for LGBTQ-inclusive Recommendations Letter for the NCAA bidding process, May 25, 2016 (e.g. inclusive community outreach, inclusive vendors, inclusive fan codes of conduct).



Georgia Unites Against Discrimination  
GLBTQ Legal Advocates & Defenders  
GLAD Alliance  
GLAAD  
The GLBT Community Center of Central Florida  
The GLO Center in Springfield, Missouri  
GLSEN  
Greater Boston PFLAG  
Greater Palm Springs Pride  
Hetrick-Martin Institute  
Horizons Foundation  
Hudson Valley Feminists  
Human Rights Campaign  
LA LGBT Center  
Lambda Legal  
Latino Equality Alliance  
The LGBT Community Center  
LGBTQ Center of Durham  
LGBT Center of Central PA  
The LGBT Community Center of Greater Cleveland  
LGBT Center of Raleigh  
LGBT Detroit  
The Long Island LGBTQ+ Visibility Coalition  
The Long Island Transgender Advocacy Coalition  
Long Island Pride Sports Association  
Lost n Found Youth  
MassEquality  
Mazzone Center  
Milwaukee LGBT Community Center  
National Black Justice Coalition  
National Center for Transgender Equality  
National LGBTQ Task Force  
NYC Pride  
Odyssey Youth Movement  
One Million Kids For Equality  
One n Ten  
Our Family Coalition  
Pace University LGBTQ+ & Social Justice Center  
Phoenix Pride  
Picture The Homeless

PFLAG National





PFund Foundation

Positive Images

Pride Center of Western New York

Pridelines

Pride for Youth

RAD Remedy

Reaching Out MBA

Religious Institute

Resource Center

Rockland County Pride Center

San Diego LGBT Community Center

SF LGBT Center

The Social Action Committee of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship at Stony Brook

SoulForce

SpeakOUT Boston

Spectrum Transgender Support Group of WNY

Stonewall Community Foundation

Stonewall National Museum & Archives

TransAthlete.com

Transcend Legal

Transgender Law Center

Human Rights Campaign

1640 Rhode Island Avenue Northwest

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