



## **AB 677 – Reducing LGBT Disparities in Education and Employment**

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Sponsor: Equality California

### **In Brief**

AB 677 would require various state departments that provide educational and employment services to members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) community to collect voluntary, self-identified information pertaining to sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) in the regular course of collecting other types of demographic data. Aggregated SOGI data serves as an indicator of disparities in health and well-being and would be required to be reported to the Legislature in order to improve the quality of services provided to LGBT Californians.

### **The Issues**

The systemic exclusion of SOGI data when other demographic data is collected has led to LGBT people being unserved, underserved, and inappropriately served within the educational and employment systems. LGBT people face significant disparities compared to the broader community, including disproportionately high rates of poverty, suicide, homelessness, substance abuse and targeting for violence. These disparities are particularly prevalent among LGBT youth and seniors, transgender people, and communities of color. Collecting voluntary data on SOGI is necessary to provide state agencies with the information they need to understand the extent of disparities LGBT communities experience and effectively serve the specific needs of LGBT individuals.

### **The Solution**

Collecting accurate demographic data in order to understand, compare, report, and apply that data to the enhancement and improvement of public services provided to all Californians is imperative to reduce the disparities specific communities face. AB 677 would require that state agencies focusing on education and employment collect SOGI data when they collect other demographic data, with the goals of meeting the specific needs of the LGBT community and addressing the disparities LGBT individuals face today.

### **Support**

Equality California (Sponsor)  
American Civil Liberties Union of California  
APLA Health

### **Background**

Research has shown that LGBT students in California K-12 schools experience harassment, administrative discipline, and feelings of unsafety at a higher rate than their non-LGBT peers. The Gay Lesbian Straight Education Network's (GLSEN) 2013 National School Climate Survey found that 91% of California LGBT students report hearing anti-LGBT remarks, 7 in 10 reported being threatened based on their sexual orientation, and nearly one-third report physical harassment. GLSEN survey data also found that 30% of LGBT students reported frequently skipping class because they felt unsafe at school. While 62% of students victimized do not report the incident to school staff, only 39% of those who did report incidents felt it resulted in effective intervention. In addition, according to a study by the Williams Institute at the University of California, Los Angeles, School of Law, LGBT youth are 1.4 times more likely to be expelled than non-LGBT youth.

Data from the Williams Institute on patterns of poverty in LGBT communities in California showed that 13% of LGBT people are unemployed compared with 10% of Californians overall. Research found that nearly 24% of children being raised by same-sex couples live in poverty compared to 9% of children being raised by different-sex couples. These reports show the importance of state agencies gaining access to socioeconomic indicators that help identify areas of need within LGBT communities and provide context for developing policies and programs in the future to address these needs.

### **For More Information**

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