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Dave Hughes | dave.hughes@outleadership.com | 619-709-4043
Stephen Peters | stephen.peters@hrc.org | 202-423-2860

56 Major Companies Respond to Alarming Effort to Erase Transgender People From Legal Protections

- *Statement comes following New York Times report that federal agencies are discussing attempts to redefine “sex” in an effort to erase transgender non-discrimination protections*
- *Major companies -- with more than 2.4 trillion in collective revenue -- stand in solidarity with transgender, gender non-conforming and intersex people in a time of heightened violence against marginalized people*
- *Statement organized by 14 community organizations working for LGBTQ+ equality*

NEW YORK — Responding to a rising tide of legislative and administrative attempts to further marginalize transgender, gender non-conforming and intersex people — including a recent [report](#) by the *New York Times* on administrative efforts to erase transgender non-discrimination protections through reinterpretation of existing law — 56 major companies today issued a [business statement in support of transgender equality](#).

The statement also comes at a time of heightened violence against marginalized people, including the communities affected by the political violence of last week, the massacre at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh, the hate crimes in Louisville based on race, and the attempted serial bombing campaign against prominent political leaders and news media organizations.

Noting that diversity and inclusion are good for business, and that discrimination significantly harms transgender people and imposes enormous productivity costs, the statement calls for respect and transparency in policy-making, and for full equality under the law. The full text of the statement is included below.

The companies signing the statement as part of its launch represent nearly 4.8 million employees, have a collective annual revenue of more than \$2.4 trillion, and are drawn from a broad range of industries including financial services, consumer products, and technology. Additional corporate signatories are expected to join the letter in the coming days.

“Equality is not a right for some, but for all. Executive actions and laws that allow discrimination erode our ability to foster vibrant, competitive workforces, which halts growth, creativity, and innovation. Our workplaces and communities must be diverse and welcoming for all people, regardless of race, sex, national origin, ethnicity, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation or gender identity.” — **Elizabeth Wood**, *Chief Human Resources Officer, Levi Strauss & Co.*

“Treating all people fairly, equally and with respect is the very core of IBM’s values. We believe no one should be discriminated against for being who they are. That’s why we’re proud to stand in support of the transgender and entire LGBT+ communities, and it’s why we will continue advocating for Congress to pass the Equality Act and ensure transgender individuals are treated equally under the law.” — **Tia Silas**, *Vice President, Global Chief Diversity & Inclusion Officer, IBM Corporation*

14 LGBTQ+ community organizations, led by Out Leadership and the Human Rights Campaign (HRC), organized the effort to secure corporate signatories. The coalition also included: Athlete Ally, Freedom

for All Americans, GLAAD, GLSEN, Lambda Legal, National Center for Transgender Equality, National LGBT Chamber of Commerce, National LGBTQ Task Force, Out & Equal, PFLAG National, The Trevor Project, Transgender Legal Defense and Education Fund (TLDEF).

“We’re proud that the business community is raising its voice to defend some of the most vulnerable members of our society and helping to fill the leadership vacuum created by the federal government. As we see in our work all around the world, businesses are serving as a backstop for hard-earned progress toward LGBT+ equality – because it’s the right thing to do, and because they see their inclusive cultures as good investments worth protecting. We are grateful to all of our member companies who stood up immediately to call for this statement for their courage and leadership.” — **Todd Sears**, *Founder and Principal, Out Leadership*

“These major businesses are speaking out in one united voice to make clear they stand with the transgender community against the alarming effort by the Trump-Pence administration to gut enforcement of existing civil rights protections. The overwhelming response to this latest attack on equality sends a powerful message of solidarity to the LGBTQ community. To be clear, no matter how hard this administration continues to try, we will not be erased.” — **Jay Brown**, *Acting Senior Vice President for Programs, Research, and Training, Human Rights Campaign*

“So often, these discriminatory policies are made in the name of Business, but companies and communities know that discrimination is – in fact – bad for business. Transgender individuals are deserving of employment, equality, and respect, and the companies who have signed this letter know that and are stronger for it. We urge the White House to sign on and join the millions of Americans who stand for equality for all.” - **Erin Uritus**, *CEO, Out & Equal Workplace Advocates*

[Business statement for transgender equality](#)

November 1, 2018

We, the undersigned businesses, stand with the millions of people in America who identify as transgender, gender non-binary, or intersex, and call for all such people to be treated with the respect and dignity everyone deserves.

We oppose any administrative and legislative efforts to erase transgender protections through reinterpretation of existing laws and regulations. We also fundamentally oppose any policy or regulation that violates the privacy rights of those that identify as transgender, gender non-binary, or intersex.

In the last two decades, dozens of federal courts have affirmed the rights and identities of transgender people. Cognizant of growing medical and scientific consensus, courts have recognized that policies that force people into a binary gender definition determined by birth anatomy fail to reflect the complex realities of gender identity and human biology.

Recognizing that diversity and inclusion are good for business, and that discrimination imposes enormous productivity costs (and exerts undue burdens), hundreds of companies, including the undersigned, have continued to expand inclusion for transgender people across corporate America. Currently more than 80 percent of the Fortune 500 have clear gender identity protections; two-thirds have transgender-inclusive healthcare coverage; hundreds have LGBTQ+ and Allies business resource groups and internal training efforts.

Transgender people are our beloved family members and friends, and our valued team members. What harms transgender people harms our companies.

We call for respect and transparency in policy-making, and for equality under the law for transgender people.

Accenture
Adobe Systems Inc.
Airbnb
Altria Group
Amalgamated Bank
Amazon
American Airlines
Apple
Automatic Data Processing Inc. (ADP)
Bank of America Merrill Lynch
Ben & Jerry's Homemade
BNY Mellon
Cargill
Cisco Systems Inc.
Citi
Clifford Chance
Corning Incorporated
Corteva Agriscience™, the Agriculture Division of DowDuPont
Deutsche Bank
E. I. du Pont de Nemours and Company
Facebook
Fastly, Inc.
Google
Hogan Lovells International LLP
HSBC
IBM Corporation
Intel Corporation
Intuit Inc.
Iron Mountain
JPMorgan Chase & Co.
Levi Strauss & Co.
LinkedIn
Lush Handmade Cosmetics
Lyft
Marriott International
MassMutual
MGM Resorts International
Microsoft Corp.
Nike Inc.
PepsiCo
Replacements, Ltd.
Ropes & Gray
Royal Bank of Canada
S&P Global
Salesforce

Sheppard Mullin
Sodexo Inc.
Splunk
State Street Corporation
The Coca-Cola Company
The Dow Chemical Company
TiVo Corporation
Trillium Asset Management
Twitter Inc.
Uber
Warby Parker

Out Leadership is the global LGBT+ business network CEOs and multinational companies trust to generate Return on Equality®. It creates global executive events and insights that help leaders realize the economic growth and talent dividend derived from inclusive business, and convenes groundbreaking talent accelerators: OutNEXT, the first global leadership development program for the next generation of LGBT+ talent; Quorum, which seeks to advance LGBT+ diversity in corporate governance; and OutWOMEN, which convenes and celebrates LGBT+ women in business. Out Leadership is a certified B Corp. For more information, please visit www.outleadership.com

The Human Rights Campaign is America's largest civil rights organization working to achieve equality for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer people. HRC envisions a world where LGBTQ people are embraced as full members of society at home, at work and in every community.

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