

A Commitment to LGBT Health

Whereas all people, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people, deserve to enjoy healthy lives and to have access to health care that effectively addresses all aspects of their needs, including prevention, treatment, and wellness services;

Whereas LGBT people come from a wide variety of backgrounds and are part of every racial, ethnic, religious, and socioeconomic group;

Whereas LGBT people, including many same-sex couples, live in almost every county in my state and are part of the fabric of American society;

Whereas more than one million same-sex couples are raising children;

Whereas LGBT people and their families are regularly discriminated against in employment and relationship recognition, resulting in significant disparities in insurance coverage and health status that are recognized by authorities such as *Healthy People*, the American Medical Association, and the Institute of Medicine;

Whereas these disparities are exacerbated by factors such as high rates of anti-LGBT violence; the stress of coping with anti-LGBT discrimination; and practices that limit or deny coverage to people with life-threatening conditions, including a cancer diagnosis, high blood pressure, diabetes, or HIV/AIDS;

Whereas LGBT people of color and others who live at the intersections of multiple disparity groups face entrenched racism, sexism, and other barriers that limit their access to health care and undermine their ability to keep themselves and their families healthy;

Whereas LGBT people and their families are routinely misunderstood, mistreated, or openly discriminated against by health care providers who are not familiar with or sympathetic to their needs;

Whereas America's health system can best serve LGBT youth, the children of LGBT parents, and older LGBT adults by better supporting alternative family structures and nontraditional caregivers;

Whereas the Affordable Care Act and state legislation that prohibits discrimination against LGBT people, expands LGBT cultural competency, and prioritizes LGBT data collection are cornerstones of sound, coherent efforts to transform our health system, improve our state's health, and eliminate LGBT health disparities;

NOW, THEREFORE, I _____ commit to

1. Show LGBT people that they count by supporting the inclusion of gender identity and sexual orientation measures on state surveys such as the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS); and
2. Support health-related legislation that prohibits discrimination against LGBT people, expands LGBT cultural competency, and implements the Affordable Care Act so that is inclusive of the needs of LGBT people.