



CONGRESSIONAL LGBTQ+ EQUALITY CAUCUS

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Congressional LGBTQ+ Equality Caucus:

Inaugural Report on the Condition of LGBTQ+ People in the United States

CEC Report

Prepared by Equality
Caucus Staff

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

LGBTQ+ people deserve the same opportunities to thrive as their non-LGBTQ+ peers. The data we currently have available about the wellbeing of LGBTQ+ people paints, however, a disturbing picture: across the board, whether it's the ability to learn in a safe and welcoming school environment, make a living, live a healthy life, or afford and access housing, LGBTQ+ people face worse outcomes than their non-LGBTQ+ peers.

This report is meant to establish a benchmark of where we are in the fight for true lived equality for LGBTQ+ people—a benchmark by which we can measure our progress in the years to come. Unfortunately, as this report shows, we are not starting in a great place, as LGBTQ+ people continue to face worse outcomes than their non-LGBTQ+ counterparts in key areas of life. The following pages highlight many of the challenges LGBTQ+ people experience in education, economic wellbeing, health care, and housing. These four areas, though not comprehensive of the LGBTQ+ experience, are critical to people's wellbeing and help shine a light on the experiences of LGBTQ+ people in today's society.

The disparities outlined in this report do not occur in a vacuum. For most of our country's history, politicians ignored the needs of LGBTQ+ people or actively worked to restrict their rights—and many still do. This past year alone, we saw hundreds of anti-LGBTQ+ bills introduced in state legislatures across the country, and more than two dozen of them were signed into law. Radical right-wing politicians are demonizing our community and especially targeting transgender and non-binary youth. For LGBTQ+ people to thrive, these attacks must end.

As Chair of the Congressional LGBTQ+ Equality Caucus, I am honored to lead a caucus of 175 members of the U.S. House of Representatives dedicated to advancing LGBTQ+ equality on the federal level. Not only are we pushing back against these anti-LGBTQ+ attacks, but we are also advancing a vision of what a country that truly embraces equality for all looks like. Our goal is not just legal equality but lived equality—a world where the disparities highlighted in this report cease to exist.

At the end of this report, you will read about some of the work the Congressional LGBTQ+ Equality Caucus' members have done to improve the lives of LGBTQ+ people. We could not do this work without the support of our constituents, and I know that, together, we can address these disparities and build a better country for the LGBTQ+ community. I hope this report will serve as a call to action and that you will join us in the fight for true LGBTQ+ equality.



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "David N. Cicilline".

David N. Cicilline
Chair

Congressional LGBTQ+ Equality Caucus



EDUCATION

From a young age, LGBTQ+ people face disparities and challenges. LGBTQ+ harassment and exclusion are pervasive in the education system, which often manifest in hostile school environments.¹ The LGBTQ+ community faces higher rates of bullying and discrimination than cisgender and straight students in schools.² A hostile environment and lack of affirming spaces has led to disproportionate outcomes in school performance, attendance, and social inclusion for LGBTQ+ students.³ LGBTQ+ students of color face additional challenges in schools because of racism.⁴

K-12 EDUCATION

The unsafe environment LGBTQ+ students face can manifest in many forms, including with physical violence, threats, intimidation, bullying, anti-LGBTQ+ speech, exclusion, and discrimination.⁵

In 2021

76.1%

of LGBTQ+ students who attended school in-person at some point during the 2021-2022 academic year reported experiencing in-person verbal harassment based on their sexual orientation, gender expression, or gender at some point in the past year.

In a 2021 survey conducted by GLSEN, 76.1 percent of LGBTQ+ students who attended school in-person at some point during the 2021-2022

academic year reported experiencing in-person verbal harassment based on their sexual orientation, gender expression or gender at some point in the past year—60.7 percent of students based on sexual orientation, 57.4 percent based on gender expression, and 51.3 percent based on gender.⁶ 31.2 percent of all LGBTQ+ students in the 2021 survey who attended school in-person at some point reported that they were physically harassed and 12.5 percent were physically assaulted.⁷

74.2%

of all transgender students reported feeling unsafe in school because of their gender.

During the 2020-2021 academic school year, 36.6 percent of students who attended school online at some point were harassed online based on their sexuality, and 31.8 percent based on their gender expression.⁸ In addition, 53.7 percent of LGBTQ+ students who attended school in-person at some point were sexually harassed in the past year at school.⁹ Transgender and nonbinary students experienced higher rates of in-person victimization and harassment than their LGB counterparts.¹⁰ 74.2 percent of all transgender students reported feeling unsafe in school because of their gender.¹¹ 61.5 percent of LGBTQ+ students did not report the harassment or assaults they



experienced, believing staff would not address it.¹² This belief is supported by the data—more than six in ten students (60.3%) who did report an incident were either told to ignore it or reported that school staff did nothing in response.¹³

Although the 2021 GLSEN survey does not survey non-LGBTQ+ students, federal data from 2019 shows that LGBTQ+ students experience bullying and threats of violence at higher rates than their non-LGBTQ+ counterparts.¹⁴ For example, 43 percent of transgender youth reported having been bullied on school property, compared to 18 percent of cisgender youth.¹⁵ 29 percent of gay or lesbian youth and 31 percent of bisexual youth had been bullied on school property, compared to 17 percent of straight youth.¹⁶ In addition, transgender youth were more than four times as likely as cisgender youth (29 percent v. 7 percent) to have been threatened or injured with a weapon on school property.¹⁷ 16 percent of gay and lesbian youth and 11 percent of bisexual youth had been threatened or injured with a weapon on school property, compared to 7 percent of straight youth.¹⁸

In addition to these experiences of bullying, harassment, and threats of violence, LGBTQ+ students also frequently hear anti-LGBTQ+ remarks at school.¹⁹ For example, according to GLSEN's 2021 survey, nearly all LGBTQ+ students (97.0 percent) heard "gay" used in a negative way at school,²⁰ nine out of ten LGBTQ+ students (91.8 percent) heard negative remarks about gender expression,²¹ and more than eight in ten LGBTQ+ students (83.4 percent) heard negative remarks specifically about transgender people.²² Nearly one in six students (58 percent) reported hearing homophobic remarks from teachers or school staff,²³ and only one-tenth of LGBTQ+ students (10.9 percent) reported that school staff intervened most of the time or always when overhearing such remarks.²⁴ This number was even lower (8.8 percent) when it came to staff

intervening in response to negative remarks about gender expression.²⁵

According to GLSEN, LGBTQ+ students also face discriminatory practices and policies that target their sexual orientation or gender identity. These include being prevented from using their chosen name or pronouns (29.2 percent),²⁶ being prevented from using the bathroom or locker room that align with their gender (27.2 percent and 23.8 percent respectively),²⁷ being prevented from playing on the sports team consistent with their gender (16.0 percent),²⁸ being disciplined for public affection that is not similarly disciplined among non-LGBTQ+ students (25.2 percent),²⁹ and being prevented from writing or talking about LGBTQ+ issues in school projects (15.6 percent)³⁰ or in extracurricular activities (16.6 percent).³¹ In total, in 2021, 58.9 percent of LGBTQ+ students reported experiencing LGBTQ-related discriminatory policies or practices in school.³² In addition, 71.6 percent of LGBTQ+ students reported that their classes did not include any LGBTQ+ topics, and only 16.3 percent of LGBTQ+ students were taught positive representations of LGBTQ+ people.³³

These negative experiences have real consequences for LGBTQ+ students. In 2021, 68.0 percent of all LGBTQ+ students surveyed by GLSEN reported feeling unsafe in their school environment due to their perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, or expression: 50.6 percent of LGBTQ+ students felt unsafe at school because of their sexual orientation, 43.2 percent because of their gender expression, and 40.3 percent because of their gender.³⁴ LGBTQ+ students who face higher rates of victimization because of their sexual orientation were more than two and a half times more likely to miss school than those who faced lower rates of victimization (60.7 percent vs. 23.3 percent).³⁵ 78.8 percent of LGBTQ+ students reported that they have avoided school functions or extracurricular activities because they felt uncomfortable or unsafe,³⁶ and



approximately four out of ten LGBTQ+ students avoided particularly gendered areas such as bathrooms or locker rooms because they felt unsafe or uncomfortable.³⁷ Approximately one in six LGBTQ+ students (16.2 percent) reported changing schools because of the way the hostile environment made them feel.³⁸ LGBTQ+ students who experienced discrimination had lower grade point averages,³⁹ higher rates of punishment,⁴⁰ a lower sense of community,⁴¹ and higher rates of mental health issues than those who did not experience discrimination.⁴²

Several other recent studies looking at the experience of young LGBTQ+ people also found evidence of lower educational achievement for LGBTQ+ people than their non-LGBTQ+ counterparts.⁴³ For example, one study found that LGB high school students are two percent less likely to graduate high school and three percent less likely to attend college than straight students.⁴⁴ Another study found that transgender individuals have lower educational outcomes, as well.⁴⁵ Different studies have also found lower levels of educational achievement among young sexual minority women (though they found gay and bisexual men had similar educational levels as straight men).⁴⁶

HIGHER EDUCATION

Studies show that high school experiences often have an impact on the college plans and college experiences of LGBTQ+ student.⁴⁷ Almost 10 percent of LGBTQ+ students who experienced harassment did not plan to attend college after high school.⁴⁸ Once at college, LGBTQ+ people face additional obstacles. Sexual orientation was the second most motivating bias for hate crimes at

postsecondary institutions in 2019.⁴⁹ LGBTQ+ college students also disproportionately struggle with mental health issues compared to cisgender and heterosexual college students; for example, 74 percent of LGBTQ+ college students reported struggling with their mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic, compared to 64 percent of straight students.⁵⁰

LGBTQ+ undergraduate and graduate students also report higher rates of adverse experiences than their non-LGBTQ+ counterparts, including in-person bullying (19.1 percent v. 5.4 percent), online or other indirect bullying or harassment (12.5 percent v. 5.3 percent), sexual harassment (17.6 percent v. 5.8 percent), and sexual assault (11.8 percent v. 2 percent).⁵¹ LGBTQ+ students were more than twice as likely to have changed their outward appearance such as dress and mannerisms to avoid discrimination at college compared to non-LGBTQ+ peers (15.7 percent v. 7.0 percent).⁵²

CONCLUSION

As these surveys make clear, LGBTQ+ students face many obstacles, including harassment and discrimination, which impact their ability to learn in a safe and affirming environment. Since these surveys were taken, many state legislatures have passed policies that specifically harm LGBTQ+ youth, including bans on transgender students' ability to play sports, curriculum censorship laws, and laws limiting transgender people's ability to access the correct restroom. These laws are likely to further exacerbate the challenges that LGBTQ+ students already face in educational settings.



ECONOMIC SECURITY

LGBTQ+ people disproportionately face economic insecurity as they struggle with employment discrimination and higher unemployment rates than their non-LGBTQ+ counterparts. This impacts their ability to afford and secure food as many live in poverty and struggle with food insufficiency. Within the LGBTQ+ population, transgender individuals face additional challenges securing jobs and accessing promotions compared to their cisgender counterparts.

DISCRIMINATION AND ECONOMIC INSECURITY

Economic insecurity does not occur in a vacuum; many LGBTQ+ people experience discrimination, which can contribute to higher poverty rates and food insecurity. For example, a Center for American Progress (CAP) survey of LGBTQ+ adults found that 35 percent of LGBTQ+ Americans faced discrimination in 2020, which moderately or significantly affected their ability to be hired.⁵³ In addition, 31 percent of respondents failed to receive a promotion or retain employment due to their gender identity or sexual orientation.⁵⁴

Discrimination not only impacts LGBTQ+ people's economic security but also their ability to bring their full selves to the workplace. In 2020, more than half of respondents to the CAP survey reported hiding their relationships at work to avoid discrimination.⁵⁵ Sixty-two percent of college-educated LGBTQ+ Americans reported having hid a relationship from others, and many LGBTQ+ people reported avoiding specific jobs to avoid discrimination in the workplace.⁵⁶

Although the Supreme Court ruled in 2020 that anti-LGBTQ+ employment discrimination is prohibited under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, discrimination against LGBTQ+ people persists. A May 2021 survey found that 8.9 percent

of LGBT employees were fired or not hired in the past year because of their sexual orientation or gender identity.⁵⁷

Looking not just at the past year but their entire lifetime, more than one in four (29.8 percent) LGBT employees reported experiencing employment discrimination because of their sexual orientation or gender identity.⁵⁸ Anti-LGBTQ+ discrimination disproportionately impacts LGBT employees of color and transgender people: LGBT employees of color were more likely than white LGBT employees to not be hired because of their sexual orientation or gender identity, and nearly half of all transgender employees (48.8%) experienced employment discrimination compared to 27.8 percent of cisgender lesbian, gay, and bisexual employees.⁵⁹

POVERTY AND FOOD INSUFFICIENCY

LGBTQ+ people face higher rates of unemployment & low incomes than non-LGBTQ+ people.

LGBTQ+ people face higher rates of unemployment and higher rates of low incomes than their non-LGBTQ+ counterparts. For example, according to a 2022 Williams Institute report, 8.0 percent of LGBT people reported being unemployed in the last 7 days in a 2021 survey compared to 6.4 percent of non-LGBT people.⁶⁰ These unemployment rates correlate to individual's income levels, as 25 percent of LGBT people have



an income of less than \$24,000 compared to only 18 percent of non-LGBT people.⁶¹

A Williams Institute study analyzing federal data from 2014-2017 found that 22 percent of LGBT people in the United States live in poverty, compared to 16 percent of cisgender straight people.⁶² The study found that although straight and lesbian cisgender women have similar poverty rates (17.8 percent and 17.9 percent respectively), bisexual cisgender women experienced higher poverty rates (29.4 percent).⁶³ Bisexual cisgender men also experienced higher poverty rates (19.5 percent) than gay (12.1 percent) and straight (13.4 percent) cisgender men.⁶⁴

A September 2020 Williams Institute study found that racial and ethnic disparities are a key factor in discerning who experienced childhood poverty and that childhood poverty paves a pathway towards adult poverty for LGBTQ+ people.⁶⁵ The survey found that 73 percent of all LGBTQ+ respondents reported experiencing economic insecurity as children. At least 80 percent of American Indian, Black, and Latinx participants experienced economic insecurity as children, compared to 50 percent of White and Asian Pacific Islander respondents.⁶⁶

Additionally, food insecurity—not having enough money to buy food that one needs—is common among LGBT people. A study published in April 2020 by the Williams Institute, found that LGBT adults experience particularly high rates of food insecurity: 30 percent of LGBT people ages 18 to 34 experienced food insecurity in 2017.⁶⁷ The survey also found that the percentage of LGBT people who did not have enough food to eat was more than double that of the general population.⁶⁸ Rates of food insecurity are worse for people within the LGBTQ+ community who have multiple marginalized identities: 37 percent of Black LGBT adults experience food insecurity, compared to 22 percent of their white counterparts.⁶⁹ 31 percent of

lesbian, bisexual, and transgender women experienced food insecurity, compared to 21 percent of gay, bisexual, and transgender men.⁷⁰

During the COVID-19 pandemic in the fall of 2020, 12.4 percent of LGBT individuals reported that they had been laid off from their jobs, while 14.1 percent had been furloughed, which was more than the 7.8 percent of non-LGBT respondents who had been laid off and 9.7 percent who had been furloughed.⁷¹ 12.7 percent of LGBT adults reported not having enough to eat in 2021, compared to 7.8 percent of non-LGBT adults.⁷² Those with marginalized identities fared worse, with 17.3 percent of LGBT people of color facing food insufficiency, whereas only 5.6 percent of non-LGBT white people experienced food insufficiency.⁷³

Transgender individuals face worse rates of economic insecurity than their cisgender counterparts. According to an April 2022 Williams Institute study, approximately 29.0 percent of transgender adults were living at or below the Federal Poverty Level based on data collected in 2021 during the COVID-19 pandemic.⁷⁴ These findings are consistent with the largest survey of transgender individuals, the 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey, which found high rates of economic insecurity among the transgender population. For example, 29 percent of respondents were living in poverty, compared to 12 percent of the general U.S. population.⁷⁵ A factor contributing to this high poverty rate was the unemployment rate for transgender individuals: 15 percent of them were unemployed as compared to the unemployment rate for the general population of five percent.⁷⁶

According to the 2022 Williams Institute study, transgender people were almost two and a half times more likely than cisgender people to face food insufficiency during the COVID-19 pandemic (19.9 percent compared to 8.3 percent),⁷⁷ and transgender people were almost



twice as likely as cisgender people to face barriers accessing food beyond affordability, including barriers to accessing food banks and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and transportation to grocery stores or food banks.⁷⁸ Only 28.7 percent of transgender adults who met the income requirement for SNAP benefits were enrolled, compared to 38.5 percent of cisgender adults.⁷⁹ More than twice as many transgender people as cisgender people reported other barriers to accessing food, such as not having transportation (27.7 percent v. 12.3 percent).⁸⁰ These discrepancies were even larger for transgender people of color; for example, 28.2

percent of transgender people of color experienced food insufficiency compared to 6.0 percent of white cisgender people during the pandemic.⁸¹

CONCLUSION

As a whole, LGBTQ+ individuals fare worse than non-LGBTQ+ people as they struggle with higher poverty rates and less access to food. Discrimination against LGBTQ+ people impacts the community's ability to access higher paying jobs and economic resources, which in turn impacts individuals' ability to afford food and feed themselves and their families.



HEALTH CARE

The LGBTQ+ community experiences more negative health outcomes compared to their cisgender and heterosexual counterparts.⁸² Due to stigmatization, discrimination, and a lack of culturally competent health care providers, LGBTQ+ people do not have the same access to affordable, affirmative, comprehensive health care as their counterparts.⁸³ LGBTQ+ people, especially transgender people, face many challenges to finding general physicians, specialized doctors, and gender-affirming care.⁸⁴ Members of the LGBTQ+ community are at a higher risk of certain conditions such as obesity, addiction, and cancer,⁸⁵ has less access to health care, and generally have worse health outcomes.⁸⁶ LGBTQ+ people experience disparities compared to their non-LGBTQ+ counterparts in key aspects of their health, including in mental health, behavioral health, and physical health.⁸⁷ These outcomes are worse for LGBTQ+ people with multiple marginalized identities.⁸⁸

ACCESS TO HEALTH INSURANCE AND HEALTH CARE

The Affordable Care Act expanded access to health coverage for millions of Americans, including LGBTQ+ individuals.⁸⁹ However, LGBTQ+ people still face barriers to accessing health insurance at the same rates as non-LGBTQ+ people. In 2019, 12.7 percent of LGB individuals were uninsured compared to 11.4% of non-LGB individuals;⁹⁰ LGB people had higher rates of Medicaid coverage, but similar Marketplace enrollment and lower Medicare enrollment compared to their non-LGB counterparts.⁹¹ A Kaiser Family Foundation (KFF) analysis of 2017 and 2018 federal data found that 19 percent of transgender adults were uninsured compared to 12 percent of cisgender adults.⁹²

Compared to their non-LGB counterparts, LGB+ people in 2019 were more likely to report

delaying care, less likely to have a usual source of medical care, and more likely to be worried about their ability to pay medical bills.⁹³

In 2015

33%

of transgender people surveyed reported that there was at least one time in the last year where they did not seek medical care because of cost.

In the largest survey of transgender people in America, 25 percent of respondents reported having problems with their insurance in the previous year that related to them being transgender.⁹⁴ 33 percent reported that there was at least one time in the last year where they did not seek medical care because of cost, and 23 percent reported that at some point in the previous year they did not seek needed health care because of a fear of being disrespected or mistreated.⁹⁵ These outcomes were worse for people of color.⁹⁶

DISEASE DISPARITIES

LGBTQ+ people are at a higher risk of developing or being exposed to certain diseases than their cisgender and heterosexual counterparts.⁹⁷ Gay and bisexual men are more likely to have HIV, and these rates are even higher for gay men of color.⁹⁸ In 2019, men who have sex with men (MSM) accounted for 69 percent of new HIV diagnoses in the United States, and Black and



African American MSM accounted for 25 percent of all diagnoses that year.⁹⁹ In addition, in 2019, Hispanic/Latino men accounted for 18 percent of the population, but 29 percent of new HIV infections in the United States.¹⁰⁰ Transgender women also have particularly high rates of HIV; a study of seven metropolitan statistical areas found that 42 percent of transgender women participants were HIV positive.¹⁰¹

The LGBTQ+ community also experiences higher rates of HPV infection and related cervical and anal cancers.¹⁰² Lesbian and bisexual women, as well as transgender men and women, are at higher risks of breast cancer.¹⁰³ Those with multiple marginalized identities also have worse health outcomes; for example, LGBTQ+ women with physical and mental disabilities are more likely to have post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, drug dependence, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, asthma, arthritis, and diabetes.¹⁰⁴

Fear of stigma, discrimination, and institutional bias in healthcare contribute to these disparities.¹⁰⁵ Older LGBTQ+ adults are more likely to report poor health conditions, and greater instances of chronic illness, all while having less social support from the medical system.¹⁰⁶ LGBTQ+ people more broadly are less likely to have a regular health care provider, and it is more difficult for the LGBTQ+ population to find culturally competent and affirming doctors.¹⁰⁷

MENTAL HEALTH

LGBTQ+ people experience poor mental health outcomes due to various factors, including victimization, discrimination, and minority stress, including compounding discrimination for LGBTQ+ people of color.¹⁰⁸ LGBTQ+ youth experience an increased risk of suicide—they are not inherently prone to suicide risk because of their sexual orientation or gender identity, but rather they are

placed at higher risk because of how they are mistreated and stigmatized in society.¹⁰⁹

LGBTQ+ youth exhibit worse mental health outcomes than their peers.¹¹⁰ According to the CDC, 48 percent of LGB youth have seriously considered suicide compared to 13 percent of straight youth, and 63 percent of LGB youth have felt sad or hopeless compared to 28 percent of straight youth.¹¹¹ According to the Trevor Project's 2022 National Survey, 45 percent of LGBTQ+ youth seriously considered attempting suicide in the past year, and nearly one in five transgender and nonbinary youth attempted suicide.¹¹² These rates were higher for LGBTQ+ youth of color than their white peers.¹¹³ In addition, 60 percent of LGBTQ+ youth who wanted mental health care in the previous year were not able to receive it, including due to fear of discussing mental health issues, concerns with obtaining their parent's permission, and fear of being outed.¹¹⁴

CONCLUSION

From accessing health insurance to culturally competent care, LGBTQ+ people face additional barriers than their non-LGBTQ+ peers when it comes to staying healthy. Discrimination, stigma, and other factors lead LGBTQ+ people to have worse health outcomes, including mental health outcomes, than their straight and cisgender counterparts. As elected politicians across the country continue to attack the ability of LGBTQ+ people to access care, especially the ability of transgender and nonbinary youth to access gender affirming care, LGBTQ+ people are likely to experience additional hurdles to their physical and mental wellbeing.



HOUSING

Access to housing is critical to people's wellbeing, but LGBTQ+ people face barriers that impact their ability to access adequate housing. In the United States, the LGBTQ+ community faces higher rates of homelessness than non-LGBTQ+ people and more challenges accessing affordable housing. These disparities can be especially pronounced for LGBTQ+ youth and LGBTQ+ people of color. In addition, transgender individuals face unique struggles accessing housing, and the COVID-19 pandemic has further exacerbated these struggles.

HOMELESSNESS IN THE LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY

A 2020 analysis found that

17%

of sexual minority adults reported having experienced homelessness in their lives.

According to a study published by the Williams Institute in 2020, sexual minority adults are more than twice as likely as the general population to have experienced homelessness in their lifetime: Seventeen percent of sexual minority adults have experienced homelessness in their lives, as compared to six percent of cisgender straight people.¹¹⁵ Transgender people also report recent homelessness at higher rates than sexual minority and cisgender straight people in the previous year: only one percent of cisgender straight adults experienced homelessness during that time and only three percent of cisgender and genderqueer sexual minority adults experienced

homelessness during this time, as compared to eight percent of transgender adults.¹¹⁶

According to a study published in 2018 by Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago, LGBTQ+ young adults experience homelessness at more than twice the rate of their non-LGBTQ peers.¹¹⁷

Based on data from a 2020 survey

28%

of LGBTQ+ youth between ages 13 - 24 reported homelessness or housing insecurity in the past.

Based on data from a 2020 survey, the Trevor Project found that 28 percent of LGBTQ+ youth (those between 13 and 24-years-old) reported homelessness or housing insecurity in the past.¹¹⁸ According to the report, nearly half (44 percent) of Native/Indigenous LGBTQ+ youth, 16 percent of Asian American/Pacific Islander LGBTQ+ youth, 27 percent of white LGBTQ+ youth, 27 percent of Latinx LGBTQ+, youth, 26 percent of Black LGBTQ+ youth, and 36 percent of multiracial LGBTQ+ youth have experienced homelessness or housing instability at some point in their lives.¹¹⁹ These rates were higher for transgender people: the study found that 38 percent of transgender girls and women experienced housing instability, while 39 percent of transgender boys and men experienced housing instability.¹²⁰ This is in comparison to 23 percent of cisgender LGBTQ+ youth.¹²¹



A significant factor contributing to homelessness amongst LGBTQ+ youth is family rejection.¹²² According to the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), LGBTQ+ youth experience high rates of homelessness because they are kicked out of their homes or asked to leave their living arrangements.¹²³ According to HUD's study of housing and homelessness experiences among LGBTQ+ young adults and youth, 70 percent of LGBTQ+ youth who were homeless were asked to leave their homes by their parents.¹²⁴

ACCESSING AFFORDABLE AND SAFE HOUSING

LGBTQ people face various forms of discrimination during the housing process, such as same-sex couples receiving fewer responses to advertised units than different-sex couples¹²⁵ or being charged higher rents than different-sex couples.¹²⁶ A similar issue is seen with mortgage lenders; a study from 2019 found that same-sex couples have lower approval rates and higher interest rates as compared to different-sex couples.¹²⁷ LGBT people are less likely to own a home than their cisgender straight counterparts (49.8 percent v. 70.1 percent), and similarly, same-sex couples are less likely to own a home than different-sex couples (63.8 percent v. 75.1 percent).¹²⁸ According to the 2015 U.S transgender Survey, only 16 percent of transgender individuals were likely to own a home, as compared to the general U.S population (63 percent).¹²⁹

In addition, HUD found significant racial disparities within the LGBTQ+ population. According to a HUD survey conducted in 2021, white LGBTQI+ renters exhibited housing insecurity rates similar to their non-LGBTQI+ counterparts, but Black and Hispanic LGBTQI+ renter households experienced higher housing insecurity than non-

LGBTQI+ Black and Hispanic counterparts.¹³⁰ Almost 30 percent of Black LGBTQI+ respondents reported being behind on rent as compared to 24 percent of Black non-LGBTQI+ renters.¹³¹ 21 percent of LGBTQI+ Hispanic renters were behind on rent compared to 17.8 percent of non-LGBTQI+ Hispanic renters.¹³²

Some of the struggles faced by LGBTQ+ people finding affordable homes were exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Data from The Trevor Project's 2021 National Survey on LGBTQ Youth Mental Health revealed that 80 percent of LGBTQ+ youth said COVID-19 made their living situation stressful and had an impact on their access to safe housing.¹³³

According to a survey conducted by the Census Bureau published in August 2021, 19.8 percent of LGBT adults lived in a household which lost employment income in the previous four weeks, compared to 16.8 percent of non-LGBT adults.¹³⁴ LGBT respondents reported having a more difficult time buying household items and paying rent than their non-LGBT counterparts.¹³⁵ In addition, 30.2 percent of LGBT people of color were not caught up on rent, as compared to 19.4 percent of non-LGBT people of color.¹³⁶

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, LGBTQ+ people face higher rates of homelessness than non-LGBTQ+ people. They struggle with securing safe and affordable housing more than their straight cisgender counterparts and are more likely to experience homelessness. LGBTQ+ youth also disproportionately struggle with homelessness, often because they are kicked out of their living situations by their parents.



KEY CONGRESSIONAL ACTION

The Congressional LGBTQ+ Equality Caucus is dedicated to addressing the disparities highlighted in this report and improving the lives of LGBTQ+ people. During the 117th Congress (2021-2022), the Equality Caucus and its members have taken numerous actions to improve the wellbeing of LGBTQ+ people.

EQUALITY ACT

As this report makes clear, discrimination continues to be a problem for the LGBTQ+ community in all aspects of life. That is why **the House passed H.R. 5, the Equality Act**, to explicitly prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, and sex characteristics in key areas of life including employment, housing, public accommodations, federally funded programs, education, jury selection, and credit.

The Equality Caucus has also supported President Biden's efforts to implement the Supreme Court's ruling in *Bostock v. Clayton County*, where the Supreme Court held that the Civil Rights Act of 1964's prohibition on sex discrimination in employment covers discrimination against LGBTQ+ people. As part of this work, **the Equality Caucus provided feedback on two critical proposed rules by the administration which clarified prohibitions on LGBTQ+ discrimination in education and health care.**

Equality Caucus members also **filed an amicus brief in the Supreme Court case, 303 Creative LLC v. Elenis**. In this case, the Court will decide if the First Amendment provides artists with a constitutional right to discriminate against LGBTQ+ people—and potentially others. The Equality Caucus knows that discrimination in any arena harms LGBTQ+ people and its members and supporters voiced their strong opposition to

misinterpreting the First Amendment to create a license to discriminate.

The Equality Caucus knows data is critical to both enforcing the nation's nondiscrimination laws and better understanding the experience of LGBTQ+ people. Much of the data in this report was compiled by nonprofit organizations, as many federal surveys still lack information on the LGBTQ+ community. With that in mind, **the House passed H.R. 1443, the LGBTQ Business Equal Credit Enforcement and Investment Act**, to require the collection of small business loan data related to LGBTQ-owned businesses. **The House also passed H.R. 4176, the LGBTQ+ Data Inclusion Act** to require federal surveys to collect voluntary information on sexual orientation, gender identity, and variations in sex characteristics.

One area where LGBTQ+-inclusive data is collected on the federal level is in relation to hate crimes. Although this data is imperfect, it shows alarming rates of anti-LGBTQ+ violence. Hate crimes do not only impact the wellbeing of the victim, but also the entire community. That is why **the House passed—and the President signed into law—S. 937, which included the Jabara-Heyer NO HATE Act**. The Jabara-Heyer NO HATE Act provides for grants to improve data collection of hate crimes—including hate crimes motivated by sexual orientation or gender identity—and for grants for states to create hotlines to assist victims of hate crimes, among other provisions. It is also critical that the nation remember and learn from violent hate crimes. **The House passed—and the President signed into law—H.R. 49 to designate the Pulse Nightclub as a National Memorial** to honor the victims of the Pulse Nightclub shooting and ensure we never forget the devastating impact of that violent attack.





#RespectForMarriageAct

Lastly, Congress passed into law **H.R. 8404, the Respect for Marriage Act**, to repeal the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA), enshrine marriage equality for the purposes of federal law, and provide additional legal protections for marriage equality.

Many factors contribute to the wellbeing of LGBTQ+ people, including the ability to marry who they love. By passing H.R. 8404 into law, Congress has made clear that it will do everything within its power to protect marriage equality.

The Congressional LGBTQ+ Equality Caucus is dedicated to improving the wellbeing of all LGBTQ+ people. Through these and other actions, the Equality Caucus' 175 members have taken concrete actions to improve the lives of LGBTQ+ people across the country—and around the world. The Equality Caucus will continue to push legislation and initiatives to ensure that all LGBTQ+ people are truly equal in society.



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