

To: Senate President Mitch Carmichael  
Room 229M, Building 1  
State Capitol Complex  
Charleston, WV 25305

CC: Senate Majority Leader Tom Takubo  
Room 227M, Building 1  
State Capitol Complex  
Charleston, WV 25305

CC: Senator Charles Trump  
Room 210W, Building 1  
State Capitol Complex  
Charleston, WV 25305

January 31, 2019

President Carmichael,

As the elected mayors of West Virginia's 12 communities with LGBT-inclusive nondiscrimination ordinances, we write this open letter to ask you to take up Senate Bill 391, which would make the kind of inclusivity found in our towns and cities available to every West Virginia resident.

These ordinances have not harmed commerce as some detractors might assert. To the contrary, they have fostered an inclusive and vibrant business environment. They have helped us to market ourselves to job creators as modern, forward-looking communities that are open to all. In some cases, they have generated positive national -- and even international -- media coverage for West Virginia.

Religious freedom has not suffered in our communities, either. We are proud of the diversity of religious thought and expression found in our churches, mosques, synagogues and other houses of worship.

These types of inclusive policies help us make our communities into places where our children might want to stay after they have completed their education. As West Virginia continues to lose population, we must listen to the younger generation when they tell us they value policies that make the LGBTQ community feel safe and secure.

Perhaps most importantly, this is just the right thing to do. We can all agree that we should treat others as we wish to be treated. No one wants to be evicted from their homes, fired from their jobs, or refused service at a business simply because of who they are.

Our communities have led the way on this issue, but together we only represent about 11 percent of the state's total population. We ask you to please place this vital bill on the agenda for the Judiciary Committee as soon as possible.

Sincerely,  
Amy Goodwin, Mayor of Charleston  
Steve Williams, Mayor of Huntington  
Robert Rappold, Mayor of Beckley  
Bill Kawecki, Mayor of Morgantown  
George Karos, Mayor of Martinsburg  
Jim Auxer, Mayor of Shepherdstown  
Scott Rogers, Mayor of Charles Town  
Wayne Bishop, Mayor of Harpers Ferry  
J.L. Campbell, Mayor of Sutton  
John Manchester, Mayor of Lewisburg

Glen Elliot, Mayor of Wheeling  
Melanie Dragan, Mayor of Thurmond