



**Maryland Commission
on LGBTQIA+ Affairs**

**Statement and Call to Action on the Ongoing Federal Attacks
on LGBTQIA+ Marylanders**

Approved on 9.8.2025

Introduction

Since March 2025, when the Commission first addressed federal attacks on transgender Marylanders, these efforts have intensified and broadened. What began as targeted attempts to restrict gender-affirming care has expanded into a coordinated campaign that threatens the health, safety, and participation of LGBTQIA+ communities across Maryland. These actions are not isolated policy changes - they reflect a deliberate effort to undermine civil rights protections and silence historically marginalized voices.

The Maryland Commission on LGBTQIA+ Affairs affirms that Maryland must lead with clarity and conviction. Silence in the face of systemic attacks communicates indifference, and indifference carries a human cost. This statement highlights key areas where federal actions are harming LGBTQIA+ Marylanders and outlines ways the state can respond.

Federal Attacks on Gender-Affirming Care

The Problem:

The federal government is moving to restrict access to evidence-based gender-affirming healthcare for minors and adults. Executive orders and proposed Medicaid rules threaten to strip hospitals and providers of federal funding if they deliver these essential services. Transgender federal employees may also lose access to coverage for gender-affirming care.

Proposed Solutions:

- Maryland should consider legal action to protect access to care.
- The state should explore alternative funding mechanisms, ensuring that Medicaid beneficiaries and other residents continue to receive gender-affirming services even if federal insurance coverage is denied.
- Policies could allow the state to directly fund providers, similar to models used to protect abortion access in Maryland, ensuring continuity of care for all who need it.

Impacts on HIV Prevention and Surveillance

The Problem:

Federal cuts have gutted research and funding for HIV prevention, including the elimination of CDC offices dedicated to HIV and the termination of hundreds of research grants. These reductions threaten access to Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) and other prevention services, disproportionately affecting LGBTQIA+ communities.

Proposed Solutions:

- Maryland must maintain and expand state-level HIV prevention and surveillance programs.
- The state should ensure continued PrEP coverage under Medicaid and ACA Marketplace plans, despite federal cuts.
- Maintaining preventive care is essential not only for public health but also to prevent future healthcare costs from rising due to untreated infections.

Discharges and Discrimination Against Transgender Service Members

The Problem:

Transgender individuals are again being discharged from the military, and access to transition-related healthcare for servicemembers and their families is severely restricted. Discharge codes may unfairly impact future employment opportunities.

Proposed Solutions:

- Maryland should issue guidance to prevent unfair employment discrimination against discharged transgender service members.
- State agencies, including the Department of Veterans and Military Families and the Department of Health, should ensure healthcare continuity for affected servicemembers and their families.

Federal Attacks on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

The Problem:

The Department of Justice has announced policies that discourage organizations from acknowledging or addressing systemic inequities related to race, gender identity, or sexual orientation. Organizations that receive federal funding could face penalties for continuing diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts.

Proposed Solutions:

- Maryland's Attorney General should challenge policies that undermine civil rights protections.
- State guidance should clarify that Maryland organizations remain protected under federal and state anti-discrimination laws.
- Organizations should be encouraged to continue equity work without fear of federal retaliation.

Attacks on Education

The Problem:

Federal actions threaten inclusive policies for transgender students, dismantle oversight functions, and undermine protections for students and parents seeking to contest discrimination. Higher education and research institutions also face destabilizing federal interference.

Proposed Solutions:

- Maryland should empower state education agencies to protect students' rights and provide rapid recourse for discrimination claims.
- The state should develop long-term strategies to sustain schools and universities, independent of federal resources.

Threats to LGBTQIA+ Participation in Public Life

The Problem:

Federal policies have attempted to erase LGBTQIA+ presence from public institutions, whether through historical omissions, restrictions on art or research, or denial of accurate documentation for transgender individuals.

Proposed Solutions:

- Maryland must ensure residents can obtain correct identification and access legal protections.
- The state should actively celebrate and protect LGBTQIA+ contributions to public life and history.

Uphold Values

These attacks are not just policy decisions - they challenge human dignity and fundamental moral values. Maryland will not stand silent. Individuals and organizations must remain true to their core values and resist actions that are illegal, unconstitutional, or harmful to marginalized communities.

Our Commitment

The Maryland Commission on LGBTQIA+ Affairs will continue to stand with service providers and communities on the frontlines. We call on leaders across government, healthcare, education, and nonprofit sectors to:

- Protect equity and inclusion.
- Resist fear-driven retreats.
- Ensure Maryland remains a safe and welcoming home for all LGBTQIA+ residents.

This is a time to be strategic, not silent. To be bold, not broken. History will remember those who stood firm when justice was tested.

In solidarity,

Maryland Commission on LGBTQIA+ Affairs