



July 2, 2014

Governor Pat McCrory
Office of the Governor
20301 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699

RE: Executive Order No. 55 Equal Employment Opportunity

Dear Governor McCrory,

We are writing to you today on behalf of the National Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce (NGLCC) to encourage you to include sexual orientation and gender identity among the protected designations included in the Equal Employment Opportunity Executive Order that you signed this week. This bold step will take your state closer to a more vibrant and fully inclusive economy and further position the State of North Carolina for significant economic growth.

The National Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce (NGLCC) is the only national not-for-profit advocacy organization dedicated to expanding the economic opportunities and advancements of the LGBT business community. With more 140 corporate partners, and 62 local, state, and international affiliate chambers—including the Charlotte Business Guild and the Raleigh Business and Professional Network—NGLCC is the largest LGBT business development and economic advocacy organization in the world.

The NGLCC enjoyed an incredibly successful conference last year when we took our largest-ever annual National NGLCC Business & Leadership Conference to the City of Dallas. The conference brought almost 700 attendees including corporate executives, lawmakers, and small business owners. The Dallas Convention and Visitors Bureau, with the help of the Destination Marketing Association International, estimated the economic impact of our 2013 conference at just over 1.2 million dollars.

We selected Dallas as our host city not only because of a thriving economy and diverse corporate industry presence, but also because Dallas has a nondiscrimination ordinance to protect its lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) employees and to foster a fully inclusive business culture. Our stakeholders, both the small business owners and large corporations want to do business in cities and states that value and welcome all people. They recognize that a fully engaged workforce is one where employees can bring their full selves to work every day without fear.

The exclusion of sexual orientation and gender identity from your executive order presents North Carolina as a state that is indifferent to LGBT people and hurts your state's ability to be fully competitive in today's marketplace. Many of North Carolina's great cities and counties already have policies protecting their LGBT employees, including Raleigh, Charlotte, Boone, Carrboro, Chapel Hill, and Orange and Mecklenburg Counties. North Carolina has a responsibility to protect all of its residents, not just those that live in particular regions.

[Certifying LGBT Businesses. Connecting Our Communities.](#)

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Nondiscrimination ordinances are essential to ensuring a fully inclusive economy that attracts and retains the very best of our diverse country. Such protection for LGBT workers encourages organizations like ours to consider North Carolina for future events, something that will be near impossible with the absence of sexual orientation and gender identity in your Executive Order.

We strongly encourage you to amend your Order and make North Carolina an even more attractive state for business, culture, and freedom.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Justin G. Nelson".

Justin G. Nelson
Co-Founder and President
National Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chance Mitchell".

Chance Mitchell
Co-Founder and CEO
National Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce