

To the Members of the House Judiciary Committee of the Montana State Legislature,

We, the undersigned members of the Montana business community, re-affirm our deep commitment to our LGBTQ employees, clients, customers, fellow business owners, and neighbors, and stand in strong opposition to House Bill 112 and House Bill 113. We ask that you also oppose HB 112 and HB 113.

As business leaders in Montana, we value full inclusion of the LGBTQ community, and the rights LGBTQ people deserve as students, employees, patrons, and visitors in our great state. HB 112 and HB 113, supported by anti-equality legislators, single out young members of our thriving communities simply for who they are and are deeply damaging to our state.

HB 112 - based on unfounded claims and fears surrounding youth participation in sports -- seeks to ban transgender youth from participating in sports. Team sports teach all children valuable life skills, including teamwork, leadership, and self-confidence. We should not deprive transgender youth of the opportunity to develop these skills.

HB 113 - singles out young transgender members of our thriving communities in being able to access medically necessary care and fines healthcare providers for giving the standard of care. Passage of such a policy could negatively impact recruitment and retention of highly qualified medical professionals who want to live and work in Montana, but not with discriminatory laws in place.

The safety, security, and well-being of LGBTQ Montanans directly impacts the growth and prosperity of our business, the productivity and retention of our employees, and the economic development of our state.

We pride ourselves on being Montana's business leaders and work hard to make sure that our businesses are safe and open to all people. HB 112 and HB 113 would not only harm transgender youth, their families, their healthcare providers, and their communities, it would also harm recruitment efforts of good employees who may not want to visit and live in Montana due to discriminatory and outdated laws.

We urge you to oppose HB 112 and HB 113. These bills will damage our businesses and our state.

Thank you.