



AMERICAN PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION
For science. For action. For health.

February 23, 2021

U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the American Public Health Association, a diverse community of public health professionals who champion the health of all people and communities, I write in strong support of H.R. 5, the Equality Act. This important legislation would prohibit discrimination based on sex, sexual orientation and gender identity in areas including education, housing, employment, public accommodations, federally funded programs, credit and jury service.

Discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity continues to threaten the health and wellbeing of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer individuals across the nation. In at least 27 states, LGBTQ Americans are not fully protected by non-discrimination protections. Discrimination against LGBTQ individuals increases the likelihood of social alienation, homelessness, financial instability, substance misuse and suicide. Anti-LGBTQ policies especially impact our nation's youth, elderly, military service members and veterans. We believe that it is essential to provide equal access to housing, employment, education, public places and other critical services that impact both individual health and the health of our communities. The Equality Act would update our laws to ensure that all LGBTQ individuals living in the United States, regardless of what state they live in, are protected from discrimination in key areas that can have a significant impact on their health.

This legislation is an important step toward realizing APHA's mission of improving the health of the public, achieving health equity and creating the healthiest nation in one generation. We urge you to support H.R. 5 when it comes to the House floor for a vote this week.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Georges C. Benjamin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Georges" and last name "Benjamin" clearly legible.

Georges C. Benjamin, MD
Executive Director