

Equitas Health Statement on the Ohio Fairness Act

2/13/2019

This week, Sen. Nickie Antonio announced that she will reintroduce—with bipartisan support—the Ohio Fairness Act, which would prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexuality, gender identity, and gender expression in employment, housing, and public accommodations. The bill would expand Ohio’s existing nondiscrimination law to cover three new protected classes, offering legal protections that do not currently exist on a state level to members of the LGBTQ community.

Ohio is currently one of 29 states to exclude members of the LGBTQ community from its nondiscrimination law. On a local level, however, twenty Ohio cities (and one entire county – Cuyahoga) have extended their nondiscrimination laws to cover members of the LGBTQ community. And just last month, Gov. DeWine issued an Executive Order that maintained nondiscrimination legal protections for LGBTQ state employees. These strides are important, but they are not enough. LGBTQ Ohioans still face incredible discrimination, particularly in some of the most important areas of people’s lives: at their jobs, in their homes, and in spaces otherwise open to the public. The Ohio Fairness Act would prohibit this sort of discrimination for all members of the LGBTQ community in the state.

Equitas Health applauds Sen. Antonio for reintroducing such an important piece of legislation and thanks her for her relentless effort to get this bill passed.

This legislative session marks the fifth consecutive session – spanning 10 years! – in which Sen. Antonio has introduced the Ohio Fairness Act. We look forward to working with her to ensure that this is the last time she will need to reintroduce this bill. All Ohioans deserve to live free from discrimination and the Ohio Fairness Act will help make that reality more achievable. Equitas Health supports the Ohio Fairness Act in full and will work diligently with our community partners to ensure its passage.