



American Psychoanalytic Association Calls Mississippi's Anti-LGBT Law 'Discriminatory and Harmful'

New York, NY – April 11, 2016 – The [American Psychoanalytic Association](#) (APsAA) condemns Mississippi's discriminatory and harmful anti-gay law (HB1523) titled "Protecting Freedom of Conscience from Government Discrimination Act". Under the auspices of protecting religious freedom, the law states that the state government will not punish people who refuse to provide services to people because of a religious opposition to same-sex marriage, extramarital sex or transgender people this includes denying employment, housing, and services.

"As psychoanalysts, we believe the role of the passive 'bystander' in bullying relationships is unacceptable, and therefore it is important our association speaks out against discrimination, and makes clear that this kind of prejudice, so damaging to so many, is deplorable. Those who stay silent on such issues contribute to this discriminatory legislation," said Mark Smaller, Ph.D., president of the association.

The recent article "[How Our Intolerant Society Contributes to LGBT Mental Disorders](#)" published in the *Advocate* summarizes several studies that show the impact discrimination, bias and intolerance has on mental and physical health.

"Study after study confirms that discrimination, especially government-sanctioned discrimination, can negatively affect one's mental health," said Smaller. "However it is important to note that studies also show that when governments enact laws that support equality, there are marked increases in overall health and well-being. This applies to the community and to families. For example, children raised in LGBT supportive families, churches and communities report less occurrences of depression, anxiety and suicidality."

The American Psychoanalytic Association has a strong ongoing commitment to promote the health and well-being of gender non-conforming and LGBT adults and youth; to eliminate violence against gender nonconforming and LGBT people; and to support full-equality in such areas as employment, housing, public accommodation, military service, licensing, parenting, adoptions and access to legal benefits. The association has released several position statements as part of this commitment including:

- [Position Statement Regarding the Impact of Bullying and Harassment on Gender Non-Conforming and LGBT Youth](#) (2012)
- [Position Statement on Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, and Civil Rights](#) (2012)
- [Position Statement on Attempts to Change Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, or Gender Expression](#) (2012)
- [Position Statement on Civil Marriage and Civil Rights](#) (2013)
- [Position Statement on Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender People Serving in the United States Military](#) (2014)

About The American Psychoanalytic Association:

The American Psychoanalytic Association is a professional organization of psychoanalysts with approximately 3,300 members. The Association is comprised of psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, educators, researchers and students who have an interest in psychoanalysis and psychoanalytic therapy. Visit apsa.org for more information.

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