

Dear Senator:

As organizations advocating on behalf of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) community, we ask you to oppose the Senate Fiscal Year 2018 Budget Resolution.

The federal budget impacts everyone in the United States, particularly people with marginalized identities, like people of color, low-income people, and LGBTQ people. The budget affects whether individuals have access to affordable health care, whether those in poverty get the assistance they need with housing and food, and whether high quality educational opportunities are available to all. It also affects the pace of scientific discovery, including research on HIV prevention and treatment. The federal budget plays a crucial role in ensuring that all communities across the country can thrive. Unfortunately, the Senate budget resolution takes the country in the wrong direction.

The Senate budget allows for a \$1.5 trillion tax cut, which will mostly benefit the wealthy and corporations, while putting vital programs at serious risk of being cut. The budget calls for cutting \$4 trillion over ten years from entitlement programs, including \$1.8 trillion from Medicare, Medicaid, and Affordable Care Act health insurance subsidies. Additionally, the resolution proposes cutting \$800 billion over 10 years from nondefense discretionary programs. These cuts may include Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or food stamps) and child nutrition, Supplemental Security Income (SSI) for poor seniors and people with disabilities, the refundable portions of the Earned Income Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit, unemployment insurance, and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), among other programs. The additional \$1.5 trillion in deficit-increasing tax cuts will exacerbate the expected deficit of \$486 billion by 2027.

Cuts to vital entitlement programs and programs for low-income individuals would hurt LGBTQ people and people living with HIV (PLHIV). LGBTQ people – and in particular, lesbian and bisexual women, people of color, and transgender people – are disproportionately vulnerable to poverty.¹ Currently, more than one in four LGB adults aged 18-44 (27%, or 2.2 million people) participate in SNAP, compared to 20% of non-LGB adults in the same age range.² An estimated

¹ Twenty-one percent of LGBT people living alone have annual incomes of less than \$12,000 compared to sixteen percent of non-LGBT people living alone. M.V. Lee Badgett, Laura Durso, & Alyssa Schneebaum, *New Patterns of Poverty in the Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Community*, The Williams Inst., 2 (June 2013), <http://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/LGB-Poverty-Update-Jun-2013.pdf>. Transgender people are four times more likely than the general population to have a household income of less than \$10,000 per year.

² Taylor Brown, Adam Romero, & Gary Gates, *Food Insecurity and SNAP Participation in the LGBT Community*, The Williams Inst., (July 2016), <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/Food-Insecurity-and-SNAP-Participation-in-the-LGBT-Community.pdf>

1.8 million LGBTQ people³ are covered by Medicaid, and Medicaid is the biggest source of health insurance for PLHIV⁴. Cuts to Medicaid would mean LGBTQ people and people living with HIV will go without life-saving healthcare.

We ask you to oppose this budget resolution, and stand against any plan with tax cuts for the wealthy and corporations that would force even deeper cuts to programs that help struggling individuals and families. Instead of the proposed budget, we call on you to support a budget that works to advance tax policies that invest in working families, while ensuring that tax cuts are paid for by closing tax loopholes or other responsible tax changes.

For questions please contact National Center for Lesbian Rights Policy Counsel Tyrone Hanley at thanley@nclrights.org, or National LGBTQ Task Force Policy Director Meghan Maury at mmaury@thetaskforce.org.

Sincerely,

American Psychological Association
CenterLink: The Community of LGBT Centers
Family Equality Council
Forward Together
Jacobs Institute of Women's Health
Los Angeles LGBT Center
Movement Advancement Project
NASTAD
National Center for Lesbian Rights
National Council of Jewish Women
National Disability Rights Network
National Health Law Program
National LGBT Bar Association
National LGBTQ Task Force Action Fund
People For the American Way
PFLAG National
Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States
True Colors Fund

³ Kellan Baker & Laura Durso, *Why Repealing the Affordable Care Act Is Bad Medicine for LGBT Communities*, Center for American Progress (March 22, 2017), <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/lgbt/news/2017/03/22/428970/repealing-affordable-care-act-bad-medicine-lgbt-communities/>

⁴ The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, *Medicaid and HIV*, <http://www.kff.org/hiv/aids/fact-sheet/medicaid-and-hiv/> (October 14, 2016).