



WASHINGTON

State Independent Living Council

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Position on Non-Discrimination, Advocacy and Outreach
For Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning Intersex
(LGBTQI) People with Disabilities

Washington State Independent Living Council
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Position

The Washington State Independent Living Council (SILC) supports the commitment of the Independent Living movement to advocate for the human and civil rights of all people with disabilities. This support includes full inclusion of members with disabilities within the Lesbian, LGBTQI community. SILC supports advocacy efforts toward equal rights of this LGBTQI population; exploring opportunities to provide training to the membership on issues surrounding people with disabilities in the LGBTQI community; and encourages membership to outreach to the LGBTQI population to include people with disabilities.

Background

- There are 4 million people with disabilities who identify themselves as members of the LGBTQI community in the United States.
- A fear of discrimination is a significant reason many do not seek help from a Center for Independent Living.
- Members of the LGBTQI community, including those with disabilities, continue to experience discrimination in employment, housing, public accommodation, education, medical care and otherwise in their everyday lives.
- Though Washington State has instituted civil rights protections and the federal government has adopted anti-hate laws, there are no federal laws preventing workplace discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity in the United States.

- Many LGBTQI citizens continue to hide their identities from friends, families, employers, coworkers, and communities out of fear of losing their jobs, not receiving adequate services or facing daily harassment.
- ESHB 2661 was signed by Governor Chris Gregoire on January 31, 2006. ESHB 2661 adds sexual orientation as a protected class in Washington State.
- Sexual orientation nondiscrimination became effective and part of the Washington State Law Against Discrimination (RCW 49.60) on June 8, 2006.

Conclusion

SILC calls for a disability movement that is all-inclusive, including members of the LGBTQI community with disabilities. This policy position promotes basic human and civil rights as well as respect and dignity for all people. It also serves as a non-discrimination policy that will be inclusive of sexual orientation and gender identity. The SILC encourages equal rights and for exploring opportunities to provide training on issues surrounding LGBTQI people with disabilities. The Independent Living movement also should increase outreach to educate the LGBTQI community on opportunities and services available for those with disabilities.

This position is consistent with the National Council on Independent Living that advocates for rights of all people with disabilities.