



To: Members of the Michigan Legislature

From: Michigan's Business Community

Date: January 23, 2023

Re: Amend the Elliot-Larsen Civil Rights Act to include sexual orientation and gender identity

As a partner in moving Michigan's economy forward, we, the leading business organizations in Michigan **urge your support of amending the Elliot-Larsen Civil Rights Act (ELCRA) to include protections for sexual orientation and gender identity.** Our members agree, a growing list of employers supporting the expansion can be found at <https://www.detroitchamber.com/chamber-statewide-business-leaders-sign-on-to-support-additional-protections-in-elliott-larsen-civil-rights-act/>.

Michigan's ELCRA is an act to define civil rights; to prohibit discriminatory practices, policies, and customs in the exercise of those rights based upon religion, race, color, national origin, age, sex, height, weight, familial status, or marital status.

Rouch World v MDCR, decided by the Michigan Supreme Court last July, found that discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity constitutes a violation of ELCRA. We believe the time has come to recognize and codify this decision in statute and prohibit discrimination on these grounds, thereby sending the message that we are open to business for all.

This is a business issue. A highly talented and diverse workforce is key to moving our state forward. Attracting and retaining a skilled workforce goes beyond competitive wages and benefits. More and more individuals seek communities and states that value diversity and inclusion. Over 70% of young Michiganders say that a state's social policies impact their decision to accept employment. This amendment supports Michigan businesses as they compete for the best and the brightest talent and retain our local graduates.

Updating the ELCRA is the right thing to do, the smart thing to do, and it is time to do it.

Right: Everyone in Michigan, whatever race, gender, religion, physical characteristic, sexual orientation or gender identity deserves protection from discrimination under the law.

Smart: Michigan's continued economic growth relies on keeping and attracting talent.

Time: This amendment is long overdue, and research shows an overwhelming, bi-partisan number of Michigan residents believe this needs to change. We agree.

Please take action to amend the ELCRA and support a thriving and prosperous Michigan for ALL.

cc: The Honorable Gretchen Whitmer
Governor, State of Michigan