



# County of Santa Cruz

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## BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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**Meeting Date:** April 19, 2016  
**Date:** April 13, 2016  
**To:** The Board of Supervisors  
**From:** Ryan Coonerty, Third District Supervisor, John Leopold, Vice Chair  
**Subject:** Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Discrimination

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As you may be aware, this past February the City of Charlotte, North Carolina passed a city ordinance prohibiting discrimination in employment and public accommodations based on sexual orientation and gender identity. The City of Charlotte should be commended for their efforts to support equal protection for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) people. However, the following month, the General Assembly of North Carolina convened a special session to introduce HB2, “the Public Facilities and Privacy Security Act” and “Statewide Consistency in Laws Related to Employment Contracting”, in response to the Charlotte ordinance. HB2, which was signed into law by the governor, has far-reaching implications for the state and for anyone who may identify as a GLBT person in North Carolina. The bills preempt local nondiscrimination ordinances seeking to protect the rights of GLBT citizens with regard to employment, wages, and protections against discrimination based on sexual orientation and identity.

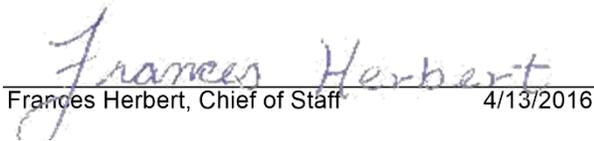
In addition, the Governor of the state of Mississippi, recently signed HB 1523, also known as the “Protecting Freedom of Conscience from Government Discrimination Act”, which effectively legalizes discrimination of GLBT people by permitting individuals, businesses, and religious organizations - including homeless shelters, adoption agencies, hospitals, and schools - to refuse services to gay couples and transgender people. The new law makes it legal in the State of Mississippi for a government employee to refuse to issue a marriage license to a gay couple, and for any business affiliated with marriages or weddings - florists, DJs, catering companies, photographers, and so on - to refuse service to GLBT citizens.

In addition, the Mississippi bill could be interpreted to provide protection for foster or adoptive parents who subject their children to “conversion therapy”, a practice that is banned in the State of California and opposed by the American Psychiatric Association.

In response to these bills, several cities including San Francisco, New York, and Seattle have taken action to ban non-essential, government-funded travel to states that pass these discriminatory laws. Furthermore, California Assemblymember Evan Low has authored AB 1887, a bill that would prohibit all California-funded travel to any state that discriminates on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression. We believe that Santa Cruz County should do the same. Accordingly, we recommend that this Board take the following actions:

1. Ban all non-essential, publicly funded travel to North Carolina and Mississippi.
2. Request that our County Counsel bring a recommendation to this Board to ban non-essential travel to any other state that passes similar discriminatory laws that deny equal protection to GLBT persons.
3. Direct the Chair write a letter to the governors and state tourism bureaus of North Carolina and Mississippi notifying them of our action taken today.
4. Support AB 1887 and write to Assembly Committee on Accountability and Administrative Review as well as members of our state legislative delegation encouraging their support.

**Submitted by:**

  
Frances Herbert, Chief of Staff 4/13/2016

**Attachments:**

- a Assembly Bill 1887: State Government: Discrimination: Travel
- b Mississippi House Bill 1523: Protecting Freedom of Conscience from Government Discrimination Act
- c North Carolina House Bill 2: An Act to Provide for Single-Sex Occupancy Bathroom and Changing Facilities

**cc:**

Senator Bill Monning, County Counsel, Assemblymember Luis Alejo, Assemblymember Mark Stone