

To: Executive Council  
 From: Joint Standing Committee on Advocacy and Networking  
 Date: June 9, 2016  
 Re: Civil Rights of Transgender People

*Resolved*, That the Executive Council of the Episcopal Church, meeting in Chaska, Minnesota, June 8-10, 2016, reaffirm the Episcopal Church's support of local, state and federal laws that prevent discrimination based on gender identity or gender expression as set forth in General Convention Resolution 2009-D012; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the Executive Council voice its opposition to all legislation that seeks to deny the God-given dignity, the legal equality, and the civil rights of transgender people, including North Carolina's discriminatory "Public Facilities Privacy & Security Act;" and be it further

*Resolved*, That the Executive Council voice its opposition to all legislation, rhetoric and policy rooted in the fear-based argument that protecting transgender people's civil rights in the form of equal access to public accommodation puts other groups at risk; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the Executive Council call upon the governor and legislators of North Carolina to repeal the "Public Facilities Privacy & Security Act" and call upon all other local, state and federal officials to enact legislation that prevents discrimination of all kinds based on gender identity or gender expression; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the Executive Council encourage Episcopalians to work against legislation that discriminates against transgender people and for legislation that prevents such discrimination, and to communicate the church's position to courts, policymakers and others across the United States.  
 Moved/Seconded: Passed

#### Explanation

In 2009, the 76th General Convention of the Episcopal Church passed four resolutions lifting up the lives and ministries of transgender people both within and outside the church (D012, D090, D032, and C048). Two (D012 and C048) put the Episcopal Church on record in support of transgender equality at the federal, state and municipal levels. In 2012, the 77th General Convention passed two resolutions (D002 and D019) that added gender identity and expression to the Episcopal Church's non-discrimination canons. Other resolutions at the 76th and the 77th General Conventions advanced the equality of transgender people in the life of the church and strengthened the church's opposition to "conversion therapy" and other dangerous and discredited practices.

These resolutions were important steps on the Episcopal Church's long journey toward understanding and accepting that God made us in more varieties than typically "masculine" men and "feminine" women, and that there are a variety of ways of being men and women and more ways of being human than simply male and female. Now we are striving to respond to these insights by dealing more justly with marginalized and stigmatized transgender people and other gender nonconforming people.

At the conclusion of the 77th General Convention, Deputy Lowell Grisham of the Diocese of Arkansas issued a statement saying, "Today the Episcopal Church affirmed the human dignity of a deeply stigmatized population that is far too often victim to discrimination, bullying and abuse. We will no longer turn a blind eye to the violence and rejection suffered by transgender people. Now our clergy and

lay leaders can represent the breadth of our church and serve as agents of welcome to all of God's people."

In 2016, the transgender community is subject to unjust discrimination in North Carolina and in others states and municipalities where similar legislation is under consideration. We must carry out the promise of our General Convention legislation by refusing to ignore violations of the dignity and God-given equality of transgender people. By advocating against discriminatory laws, by supporting non-discrimination laws, by seeking to understand better gender identity and expression as part of God's creation of humanity, and by communicating our position as Christians to our leaders and elected officials, we make tangible our promise to respect the dignity of every human being.