



TALGBTIC Newsletter



March 21, 2017
April 18, 2017
May 16, 2017

Words from the President

Dear Friends,

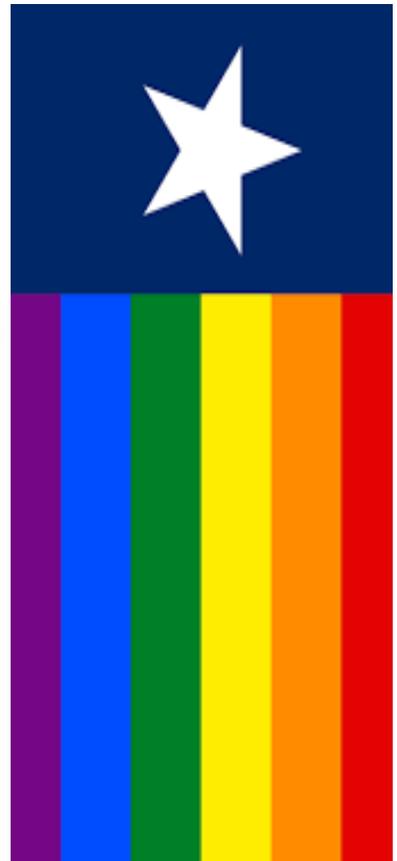
I'm Tired. Between holidays (and clients' reactions to holidays), family, new semester, not to mention politics, I'm exhausted and it's just the start of the year. I'm sure I'm not the only one in this state. The thing is though, we can't really afford to be exhausted. The clinical, education, and advocacy work we do is too important to wait for us to magically attain energy. I would like to share a few things that make it easier to balance human frailty and dedication to life and select causes:

- **Coming to terms with the limitations** and pleasures of being bipolar. For those that don't know, let me tell you. It's a bitch. But I also have founts of creativity and empathy that I'm really proud of to go along with the struggles.
- **Honest friends.** We need all kinds of friends in our lives, but when we're tired I think it's especially important to have people who will be honest and tell us that yeah, we're tired too.
- **Pleasure.** Counselors have kinda beat this whole "self-care" thing into the ground. From what I've observed people either a) treat self-care like a New Year's resolution they promptly forget about. Or b) think self-care is only spa days, meditation, and long walks on the beach. Pffft all that. Nine times outta 10 I'm perfectly happy with my books, video games, chocolate, and cheesy TV. Bottom line, simple (read guilty) pleasures actually do us a lot of good.

These things seem to be helping me have the energy when it's necessary to power through something (like this legislative session!!!). I hope y'all will join me in giving ourselves a break and kicking some tail.

Sincerely, Adrian S. Warren

Don't mess with **LGBT** Texas



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Special points of interest

- What's happening with Texas Legislation this year?
- How is legislation impacting our clients?
- What is SB92?
- What is HB2?
- How can we help our community?

Safeguarding Our Clients

Katrina M. Moore



Bathroom Injustice

The Texas legislature only meets on odd numbered years and so it might make sense that the amount and type of work they often do is also odd. For 140 calendar days this year, Lt Governor Dan Patrick and his merry bunch of marauders have decided that he will take this very precious time and legalize discrimination, better known as Bathroom Politics. The proposed purpose of SB6 is to protect the women and children.

Since the early 1990's, there has been an increase in these seemingly religious freedom bills that send a very loud and clear message. That message is that if you are LGBTQI we need to protect the world from your type of perversion. Surely this perversion is against God, so we can base this discrimination on religious reasons. Ground zero is now our Trans siblings because let's face it they are our most vulnerable. So, what do we have here? A law that stigmatizes a group of people, that is virtually unenforceable and will most certainly magnify potential dysphoria by making it even more difficult for you to live any sort of an affirmed life. If basic bodily functions create anxiety attacks, imagine what privilege looks like just not having to think twice about going to the bathroom. Message received loud and clear. In the immortal words of Dr King, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere".

Naomi Brown

Many of the upcoming bills will impact our LGBTQ clientele in unprecedented ways. SB 242 (school counselors outing children's gender identity or sexual orientation to parents), SB 92 (undoing local protections against an entity's ability to discriminate against an individual due to gender identity and sexual orientation) and HB 2 (transgender individuals having to use the bathroom matching their assigned sex at birth) are all bills that extraordinarily impact how counselors interact with clientele, the safety and economic stability of clientele and put clientele in the way of significant harm.

Many of the arguments for these bills appear to be paired with a discourse attempting to frame these bills as allowing children to receive "familial support" or to protect children using the restroom from "predators who will pretend to be transgender" or to allow businesses "religious freedoms."

"Unfortunately, all of these discourses are a pretense that will ultimately damage and violate basic human rights for confidentiality, equality and the most basic personal freedoms."

Unfortunately, all of these discourses are a pretense that will ultimately damage and violate basic human rights for confidentiality, equality and the most basic personal freedoms. It is not a coincidence that Human Rights Campaign provided a report stating that 2016 was the deadliest year for the transgender community.

In light of these recent bills, I urgently request that as counselors we consider the magnitude of this coming legislative session and its effect on our clients. Many of our clientele are already marginalized from usual safe spaces taken for granted such as family, school, religious institutions, peer groups and co-workers even within sanctuary cities.

Now, many of our clients have told us they are afraid to attend support groups, go to the school functions, go to the grocery store, go to a club with friends to dance, or walk their pet due to experiences of bigotry and hatred by people they've never even met or fear of terroristic threats. Now, more than ever, we must provide support and safety to our fellow human beings who do not feel safe navigating their personhood in the world.



Making Discrimination Legal

Faith Harper

SB 92, filed by Texas tea party State Senator Bob Hall, sounds innocuous when you first read the title, doesn't it? Interstate Commerce Improvement Act – is that going to promote commerce within the state of Texas? Definitely sounds like something the legislature should focus on. Though that isn't at all what Senator Hall had in mind, as evidenced by language prohibiting individual municipalities, cities, or counties from adopting any new laws (or enforcing any standing laws) that create **“a protected classification or prohibits discrimination on a basis not contained in the laws of this state.”**

This is called “local control preemption” and can mean a lot of different things in a lot of different cities. For example, in Austin (as Equality Texas points out), it is illegal for property owners to refuse to rent to students. Austin is a rapidly growing city as well as a huge college town and finding housing can be a challenge for anyone living there. In recent years, it has become increasingly difficult for students to find landlords willing to rent to them. The problem grew so bad that the city was forced to intercede and protect students *as a class of citizens* from housing discrimination practices.

Makes sense, right? This isn't a widespread problem in other parts of the state, so this needn't be a state law. But in Austin, it's a huge deal.

The irony is that the Texas legislation has long held that local control and more stringent enforcements should always take precedence over federal “interference.” Privacy laws are a great example. We have had them in Texas since the 1970s, far before federal HIPAA laws went into effect. The privacy laws in Texas are also tougher than the federal laws. So clinical practitioners in Texas follow Texas law, which trumps federal. So why would Senator Hall want to take away the rights of local authorities to better protect its local citizens?

Senator Hall was ranked the 2nd worst senator on LGBT issues by Equality Texas during his Freshman year (with Donna Campbell taking the #1 spot) and is known for his right wing stance on the state of democracy in our State. As the Texas Observer reported, Senator Hall stated:

“I think we're sliding into Gomorrah... If we do not change what we're doing by changing the leaders when we go to the ballot box, our children and grandchildren may be having to change their leaders with the ammo box.” Senator Bob Hall

And this is where his so-titled Interstate Commerce Protection Act starts to make sense. Texas does not have any state laws that protect LGBT individuals from discrimination. However, many Texas cities (including Austin, Dallas, Fort Worth, Plano, and San Antonio) do. Because Texas state law doesn't include sexual orientation or gender identity, cities and counties would be prohibited from enforcing LGBT-inclusive nondiscrimination ordinances, if Senator Hall's bill passes with a two-thirds vote.

These laws protect approximately 9 million Texas residents, approximately 1/3rd of our state's population. These cities have decided to take on the enforcement of such measures at their own expense to better serve the individuals that live there. Senator Hall thinks that they shouldn't be allowed to make such determinations in their local governance. Could you imagine his reply if the federal government decided to strip away the increased protections that Texas privacy laws offer those of us who live and work here and instead demand we comply with the less-stringent HIPAA regulations?

But putting aside the issues of the LGBT community for a moment, what might the possible economic ramifications could come of such a law? North Carolina has seen huge financial losses after passing anti-LGBT legislation, numbers of a magnitude that so concerned the Texas Association of Business (TAB) they came out in public opposition to such measures. Citing the \$395 million-dollar loss suffered by North Carolina after the passage of House Bill 2, The TAB estimates even larger losses in Texas. Upwards of \$8.5 billion dollars into the Texas economy and 185,000 jobs could be at stake over such a measure.

Billion. With a “b.” For a bill that prevents local legislatures from protecting their own citizens.

This is a bill that makes no sense. No fiscal sense, no structural sense, and *definitely* no moral sense. We recently saw a huge public outcry and immediate reversal of a federal move to put the Office of Congressional Ethics under the control of the House Ethics Committee, which would allow federal lawmakers complete control over their own discipline. So you know what to do now, don't you?



HB2: Bathroom Segregation

Katrina M. Moore



The HB 2 bill is a salient violation of our clientele’s rights, security and safety. Additionally, it could also impact our client’s decisions to live and financially thrive in certain areas that pass the HB 2 bill and other anti-LGBTQ legislation. This is terrifying but only in light of it being a secondary impact on the fundamental issue of the bill itself; our clientele could experience significant harm, terroristic threats and violence upon utilizing a bathroom of “assigned” gender. I invite you to consider the rhetoric being utilized and the confusing nature of the presentation of the bill. The "women's protection act" is perplexing for several reasons. If I were to abandon the non-existent statistical evidence of documented transgender violence upon children (zero) and entertain the likelihood of an individual presenting themselves as transgender (minimal) to obtain access to children or women in the women’s restroom I have left out the blatantly increasing evidence of sexual assault on male children, the blatant evidence that both male and female children are almost always assaulted by a person they know and the blatantly non-existent evidence of women ever being assaulted by an individual identifying as transgender. Additionally, by employing words like "choose" or "feel" it seems that lawmakers are abandoning both medical fluency, the fluidity of gender and what it means for an individual to identify as transgender. Medical research has endorsed what it means to be transgender in terms of hypothalamus structure, grey matter formation and neuronal numbers in addition to spiritual, emotional and mental processes. The medical community has also identified individuals who receive ambiguous genetic, hormone, gonadal and genital markers often described as being “inner-sex” thus between both genders. We’re all aware of social implications across space and time and what it means for a human to be “female” or “male”; these subjective opinions fluctuate with anthropological certainty. The CDC identifies 3% of the population as identifying as transgender but as many of us know, this could be largely inaccurate due to the continuing violence against the trans-gender community and the fear of self-identifying. Please join us in protecting our clientele through providing safety, practicing advocacy and effectively protesting this bill.



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A very big thank you to all that contributed to and helped make this newsletter!
 —Sarah



TEXAS ASSOCIATION FOR LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, AND TRANSGENDER ISSUES IN COUNSELING