



For Immediate Release

Whitman-Walker Institute Applauds the Biden-Harris Administration for Finalizing Robust Affordable Care Act Nondiscrimination Protections for LGBTQI+ Communities

WASHINGTON, D.C. [April 26, 2024] - Today, the Biden-Harris Administration released a final rule under Section 1557, the core nondiscrimination provision of the Affordable Care Act. This groundbreaking rule marks a critical step in protecting access to health care and coverage for LGBTQI+ people nationwide.

The new rule restores and expands important protections to ensure everyone can receive the health insurance coverage and health care they need, free from discrimination. Critically, the rule demonstrates a strong commitment to ensuring access for all by securing specific protections for some of our nation's most marginalized communities, including transgender, nonbinary, and intersex people, people with limited English proficiency, people with disabilities, and people who are seeking reproductive health care.

Dr. Kellan Baker, Executive Director of Whitman-Walker Institute, had this to say on the final rule:

"During a time when state legislatures are stripping transgender people of their right to basic health care, we are heartened to see the Biden-Harris administration take a strong stance on the vital necessity of access to inclusive health services for all.

The final rule reverses extremely harmful Trump-era regulations and makes clear that no one should be denied access to health care or health insurance coverage because of their sexual orientation or gender identity. Paired with robust enforcement, this rule will help dismantle barriers to care and advance health equity for LGBTQI+ and other underserved communities.

Implementation of this rule will ensure that the federal government and partners across the country continue to fulfill their responsibility to improve the health and well-being of LGBTQI+ people nationwide."

[Whitman-Walker Institute](#), which leverages research, policy, and education to advance health equity nationwide, is affiliated with [Whitman-Walker Health](#), the lead plaintiff in a 2020 [federal lawsuit](#) brought to reverse the Trump administration's weakening of Section 1557's nondiscrimination protections for underserved communities, particularly LGBTQI+ people. The

need for the Biden-Harris administration to restore and expand these nondiscrimination protections was clear. Research shows that LGBTQI+ people continue to face widespread discrimination in health insurance and health care settings:

- According to the 2022 [U.S. Transgender Survey](#), nearly 50% of respondents who saw a provider in the last year had at least one negative health care experience because of their gender identity.
- Twenty-three percent of LGBTQI+ respondents, including 37% of transgender respondents, [reported](#) postponing or avoiding needed medical care in the past year due to disrespect or discrimination by providers.

Comment from Whitman-Walker Institute on the finalization of the Section 1557 rule:

“Whitman-Walker Institute applauds the Biden-Harris administration for finalizing the rulemaking under Section 1557 of the Affordable Care Act, which restores critical nondiscrimination protections for LGBTQI+ people.

These civil rights protections come at a critical time as transgender people across the country are facing politically motivated attacks on their right to essential health care. Strong implementation and enforcement of this rule will improve the health and well-being of LGBTQI+ people across the country.”

About Whitman-Walker Institute

Whitman-Walker Institute is a Washington, D.C. based organization that leverages cutting-edge research, policy, and education to advance health equity at the federal level and in states across the country. We bring to this work expertise in rigorous research and health policy analysis, deep relationships with state and federal policymakers, longstanding partnerships across multiple justice movements, and the direct service experience of Whitman-Walker Health, a Federally Qualified Health Center that serves thousands of diverse patients across the D.C. area and beyond. The Institute is home to nationally recognized experts in areas of policy such as LGBTQI+ health equity, care for transgender people, insurance reform, social determinants of health, HIV prevention and treatment, and sexual orientation and gender identity data collection. More info can be found at: <https://www.whitman-walker.org/institute/>

About Whitman-Walker

For over fifty years, Whitman-Walker has been part of the fabric of the local Washington, DC community as well as to our nation as first responder and care-provider for those living with HIV; a leader in LGBTQI+ care and advocacy; a research center working to discover breakthroughs in HIV treatment and prevention science; and one of the DC’s most trusted partners during the current COVID-19 pandemic. Whitman-Walker envisions a society where all people are seen for who they are, treated with dignity and respect, and afforded equal opportunity to health and wellbeing. More info can be found at: www.whitman-walker.org.

#

Media Contact: Lisa Amore, Senior Director of Communications, Whitman-Walker.
LAmore@whitman-walker.org. 206-954-8006