



NATIONAL LATINX
PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

**National Latinx Psychological Association & *Orgullo* SIG
Joint Statement Against the Removal of Health Protections
for Transgender and Gender Diverse People**

We, members of the *Orgullo* Latinx: Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity Special Interest Group (SIG) of the National Latinx Psychological Association (NLPA), reflect on four years that have passed since the Pulse nightclub massacre, which remains the deadliest mass shooting of queer and trans Latinx people in US history. With deep sorrow, we remember and honor the lives of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and queer (LGBTQ+) *familia* that were brutally killed and traumatized. We carry the scars from this attack on our *comunidad* deep in our hearts.

We continue to witness and experience unconscionable amounts of discrimination, oppression, victimization, devastation, violence, and murders that target our LGBTQ+ *familia*. It is undeniably clear that these experiences are structured to carry out the systematic erasure of the LGBTQ+ community. The COVID-19 pandemic further intensified and catalyzed the preexisting social, health, and economic disparities LGBTQ+ communities are subjected to in the US. Compounded with the deaths and economic losses from the coronavirus pandemic, we are outraged by the racially motivated murders of Black people at the hands of police officers and a failed justice system that upholds white supremacist and colonial ideologies. Government-sanctioned police brutality, inhumane immigration detention, and anti-LGBTQ+ policies have been a long-standing threat to our community. We must underscore that the predatory criminal justice system that targets our Black siblings also targets immigrant LGBTQ+ Black and People of Color via an inhumane and persecutory immigration system. For example, seven trans immigrants have died in US detention since October 2017 and asylum processes have been blocked for immigrants who travelled through another country before reaching the US – a decision that affects thousands of LGBTQ+ individuals seeking to escape transphobia, trans erasure, femicide, and femmephobia in their home countries. This attack on immigrants is occurring as millions of mixed-status families and undocumented individuals were forced to await an unjust attempt by the Trump administration to end the Deferred Action for Early Childhood Arrival (DACA) program during a global pandemic.

Today, we join our voices with those of the #BlackLivesMatter movement, which was originally founded by three Black women, two of whom identify as queer, in their mission to eradicate white supremacy, anti-Black racism, and government-sanctioned violence. We are thankful to the organizers of #BlackLivesMatter, a truly intersectional movement that honors Black Lives across gender identity, sexual orientation, and other oppressed identities. A historical example of the unity and solidarity in this fight includes the Stonewall Uprising. This was a series of demonstrations in protest against police brutality that was led by Black and Latina trans women and serves as a timely reminder of the historical disenfranchisement of LGBTQ+ communities of color. PRIDE celebrations throughout the world continue to share events that honor the Stonewall Uprising and the importance of fighting systematic oppression by all means necessary.



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Our fight for the rights and dignities of traditionally marginalized communities continues. On Friday, June 12, 2020, the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) finalized a rule that would reverse an important regulation within the Health Care Rights Law, a part of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) that protects transgender and gender diverse people from discrimination in accessing health care services and insurance coverage. If the rule takes effect, DHHS would no longer recognize and uphold laws that prohibit anti-transgender bias in healthcare settings reducing systemic accountability and obfuscating their responsibility to take action to help people who have been denied care due to anti-transgender discrimination. Their actions would reinforce the long-standing barriers that transgender and gender diverse people face when seeking preventative healthcare, routine and emergency medical services, and gender-focused care (e.g., gender-affirming hormonal therapy, surgery, and more), as well as continue to perpetuate systemic and institutional erasure of the transgender community.

The timing of this rule coincides with the start of Pride month, the fourth anniversary of the Pulse nightclub massacre, and the continued protests against police brutality toward Black people. While these incidents may seem disconnected from one another, they collectively underscore levels of structural and systemic violence and erasure that our *familia* is subjected to on a daily basis. The DHHS's assault on the health and wellbeing of transgender and gender diverse people reminds us of our need to hold steadfast to our values of advocacy, justice, resilience, and resistance. We call on our membership to acknowledge that access to healthcare is a fundamental human right that is often denied to transgender and gender diverse people. The attack on trans health rights is especially dangerous in light of the continued murders of our trans sisters, particularly Black trans women, who face widespread discrimination and suffer homelessness, harassment, and poverty at much higher rates than other women in the US and globally. Black trans women are also disproportionately affected by fatal violence, informed by the intersections of racism, sexism, cis-heteronormativity, femmephobia, and trans-negativity. The murder of Black trans women is a public health crisis and we must recognize that we have not done enough to protect, serve, and uplift our trans communities.

We are cautiously optimistic about the Supreme Court's ruling that a provision of 1964's Civil Rights Act protects gender and sexually diverse people from employment discrimination. This action reaffirms that discrimination against employees on the basis of gender identity or sexual orientation amounts to discrimination against them on the basis of sex, which is illegal under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act. Our hope is that the protective effect of this ruling will extend to the ACA's health protections for transgender and gender diverse people.

In solidarity,

Your NLPA and *Orgullo* SIG familia