



Contact:

Carrie Evans, Equality Maryland
Carrie@EqualityMaryland.org, 443-514-4999

Jer Welter, FreeState Legal
jwelter@freestatelegal.org, (410) 625-5428

**Governor Hogan's First 24 Hours
Start on the Wrong Foot for LGBT Maryland**

January 22, 2015 - In his first day as Maryland's 62nd Governor Larry Hogan withdrew [regulations that would have prohibited Medicaid providers](#) from discriminating on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity and issued an Executive Order that omits gender identity as a grounds for equal opportunity.

Governor Hogan withdrew proposed amendments to COMAR 10.09.36.03A(8), the regulation that prohibits discrimination in the provision of services by Medicaid providers, to update the regulation to reflect current law barring discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and (as [revised at the urging of Equality Maryland and FreeState Legal](#)) gender identity.

Governor Hogan also issued [his first Executive Order](#), "Standards of Conduct for Executive Branch Employees and Reporting of Misconduct" this morning. In it he states, "Employees shall adhere to all applicable laws and regulations that provide equal opportunity for all Marylanders regardless of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, disability or sexual orientation." Unfortunately, the Executive Order contains no mention of gender identity, despite the passage last year of updated Maryland state law including clear protection from discrimination on the basis of gender identity and a growing consensus that discrimination on the basis of gender identity is also prohibited by federal law.

"Equality Maryland is disappointed in the Governor's actions. To withdraw a regulation that prohibits discrimination in the provision of essential medical

services, which also has no fiscal impact, seems contrary to the spirit of inclusiveness touted in his inauguration speech yesterday. [We know that trans people in Maryland face discrimination when accessing health care](#) and we should be working to ensure this doesn't happen instead of overtly condoning it," comments Carrie Evans, Executive Director of Equality Maryland.

Jer Welter, Deputy Director and Managing Attorney of FreeState Legal observes, "The issuance of an Executive Order directing Executive Branch employees to 'adhere to all applicable laws and regulations that provide equal opportunity for all Marylanders' is a good thing and we commend the Governor for reminding his staff of the applicable laws and regulations. However, those laws now include gender identity and we urge him to re-issue this Order with all of the current prohibited grounds included in state law."

Both Evans and Welter remain hopeful that Governor Hogan will agree to meet with Equality Maryland and FreeState Legal to discuss these and other issues. "I sincerely believe that Gov. Hogan envisions a Maryland that treats all of its citizens with respect and we want to work with him to ensure this extends to the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities of Maryland," comments Evans.

Equality Maryland is the state's lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender civil rights organization; FreeState Legal is a legal advocacy organization that seeks to improve the lives of low-income lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender Marylanders through direct legal services and policy advocacy.

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