

2021 GSBA Legislative Priorities



MISSION

To combine business development, leadership, and social action to expand economic opportunities for the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer community and those who support equality for all.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Advance economic and educational equity, access and opportunity for the LGBTQ community and all historically disenfranchised communities.

Center racial equity in our decision making, with a focus on LGBTQ Black, Indigenous, and people of color; and equity for the trans and nonbinary communities.

Expand, protect and promote equality, equity and civil rights for all.

Promote the vitality and development of small businesses

Foster active and informed civic engagement

TIER 1- LEAD

These are GSBA's highest priority issues, where LGBTQ civil rights and economic prosperity intersect and where our expertise is strongest. These are active areas where the organization is a leader, doing significant organizing work, direct lobbying efforts, where we have a particularly valuable voice, and which speak to our core as an LGBTQ business organization.

ISSUE

Ensure inclusive pandemic relief and recovery

SPECIFIC ACTIONS

- Ensure LGBTQ people are recognized and included in all recovery efforts
- Ensure resources are prioritized for communities disproportionately impacted by pandemic and economic crisis with a focus on small businesses owned by LGBTQ people, BIPOC, and women.

Ensure economic inclusion of the LGBTQ community

- Advocate for the counting of the LGBTQ community in public studies and demographic collection, including disparity studies
 - Advocate for government recognition, inclusion, and utilization of the LGBTBE certification in affirmative action programs and public contracting opportunities
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TIER 2 - ADVOCATE

Issues where GSBA, as an LGBTQ chamber of commerce, has a strong interest in the outcome. GSBA would likely follow the lead of another organization, but still do active work to help advance the topic, gather testimony, and show up in support. Actions include participating in coalition work, testifying, and signing amicus briefs.

ISSUE

End discrimination against and actively promote full inclusion of LGBTQ people and other historically disenfranchised communities to ensure opportunity and access to housing, education, health care, lending and accommodations.

SPECIFIC ACTIONS

- Support rules changes at WA Healthcare Authority to better reflect medically necessary care for trans people
- Support a fully inclusive and anti-racist health care system
- Oppose broad religious exemptions laws used as a pretext for discrimination
- Oppose religious hospital mergers without strong safeguards for LGBTQ people, reproductive care, and Death with Dignity
- Pass strong federal LGBTQ nondiscrimination protections

Focus economic resiliency on small businesses and historically disenfranchised communities

- Prioritize small businesses and community nonprofits in assistance efforts
- Support recovery policies that are accessible to marginalized small businesses
- Support regulatory efforts to assist in creative reimagining of economy (.e.g. street use permits)
- Support access to quality child care for all communities, including preschool and daycare
- Support reform and accountability for unemployment benefits, including automatic experience tax increases
- Fund the WA Office of Equity
- Support overturning Initiative 200 and supporting affirmative action in state government
- Insist that impact studies on small business be included in regulatory legislation

Address systemic racism and white supremacy in the criminal justice system

- Support efforts addressing rise of hate crimes
- Support efforts addressing systemic racism in policing and criminal justice systems
- Support investments in the most effective community responses that do not require armed police intervention
- Remove police accountability from the bargaining process
- Support reform of the police decertification process

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support truly independent investigations of police use of force • End qualified immunity that shields police from liability for misconduct • Support efforts to restrict violent police tactics, including banning chokeholds, teargas, and no-knock warrants.
Defend vital services for basic human needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen the social safety net and oppose austerity budgets that only cut services during economic downturns. • Support regional funding to address critical regional needs such as homelessness
Increase funding and support of LGBTQ populations who are particularly underserved, including seniors, homeless youth, people with HIV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fund dedicated LGBTQ senior housing • LGBTQ-specific homeless services funding • Oppose public dollars spent on service providers who discriminate against LGBTQ people
Support access to public education for LGBTQ students and students from other underrepresented communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support LGBTQ curriculum inclusion efforts • Support federal efforts to end high taxation of scholarship dollars

TIER 3 - SUPPORT

These are issues that GSBA supports, but where we are not a lead organization or where we do not have any particular expertise on the issue. Actions include signing letters of support.

ISSUE	SPECIFIC ACTIONS
Support gun control efforts at all scales	
Support comprehensive immigration reform at all levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support paths to citizenship for all immigrants
Support progressive reform of Washington State taxes that will create a more reliable stream of revenue, to address critical services, and to be more fairly applied	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support regional funding efforts for building additional low-income housing • Support a state income tax • Ensure that new revenue proposals do not disproportionately impact small businesses
Support public mass transit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support funding for comprehensive, regional mass transit
Defend the right of all people to have control over their own bodies, including the right to reproductive choice	
Ensure that workplaces are free of violence, harassment, and intimidation	

Make our region a more affordable place to live for both residents and small businesses

- Support commercial affordability reforms, such as zoning requirements for small commercial footprints
- Support housing-first approaches
- Support eviction moratoria for commercial and residential renters during the pandemic, including how to support small landlords

Increase state support for tourism, particularly for LGBTQ tourism