

MOUNT HOLYOKE

Mount Holyoke College
50 College Street, South Hadley, MA 01075-1496
tel 413-538-2500 fax 413-538-2391

Lynn Pasquerella
President

July 13, 2015

Honorable Charles Baker
Massachusetts State House
Office of the Governor
Room 280
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Governor Baker:

I write to you to ask your support in passing H. 1577 and S.735 An Act Relative to Gender Identity and Non-discrimination.

Last fall, Mount Holyoke updated its admission policy to admit qualified students who are female or who identify as women. This decision was an outgrowth of our longstanding commitment to inclusivity and to opening doors of opportunity to populations that have traditionally been marginalized.

In expanding our policy, we recognized that what it means to be a woman is not static. Just as early feminists argued that reducing women to their biological functions was a foundation of women's oppression, we acknowledged that gender identity is not reducible to the body.

It is notable that other women's colleges in the Commonwealth—Simmons, Smith, and Wellesley—have followed suit. Of the six women's colleges in the country that have opened their doors to trans women, four are in the Bay State.

The passage of An Act Relative to Gender Identity in 2011 was a significant first step toward protecting people from discrimination based on who they are. The Mount Holyoke community supported passage of this law both in principle and because of what it represented for our own transgender or gender nonconforming students, faculty, and staff: safety and protection under the law.

Now, it is necessary to go further to ensure protections by supporting and quickly passing H. 1577 and S.735 An Act Relative to Gender Identity and Non-discrimination. Including "gender identity" in the public accommodations law advances acceptance of the transgender community in the Commonwealth. While Mount Holyoke is deeply committed to the safety and dignity of all of our community members, these protections must also be

in place once they step off our campus grounds. Seventeen states and the District of Columbia offer full protections under the law to transgender individuals.

I hope that the Commonwealth will put itself alongside those who work to protect equal treatment of transgender citizens in all public accommodations. Please feel free to reach out to me if I can be helpful in your work on passing this important bill.

Sincerely yours,


Lynn Pasquerella

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President

July 13, 2015

Honorable Stanley C. Rosenberg
Massachusetts State House
Office of the Senate President
Room 332
Boston, MA 02133

Dear President Rosenberg:

I write to you to ask your support in passing H. 1577 and S.735 An Act Relative to Gender Identity and Non-discrimination.

Last fall, Mount Holyoke updated its admission policy to admit qualified students who are female or who identify as women. This decision was an outgrowth of our longstanding commitment to inclusivity and to opening doors of opportunity to populations that have traditionally been marginalized.

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Lynn Pasquerella
President

July 13, 2015

Honorable Robert A. DeLeo
Massachusetts State House
Office of the Speaker
Room 356
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Speaker DeLeo:

I write to you to ask your support in passing H. 1577 and S.735 An Act Relative to Gender Identity and Non-discrimination.

Last fall, Mount Holyoke updated its admission policy to admit qualified students who are female or who identify as women. This decision was an outgrowth of our longstanding commitment to inclusivity and to opening doors of opportunity to populations that have traditionally been marginalized.

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