

Rt Hon Liz Truss MP
Minister for Women and Equalities
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Dear Minister

Equality, respect and safety for LGBT workers

As Minister for Women and Equalities, we look to you to be a champion of equality, respect and safety in government.

There are more than a million working people who are LGBT+ in the United Kingdom. We write to express our concern at government inaction to address the inequality experienced by LGBT+ people.

We were dismayed that you have jettisoned the 2018 LGBT Action Plan, which was based on evidence from more than 100,000 LGBT+ people. And we were disappointed at the decision to disband the LGBT Advisory Panel.

Nearly two in five LGBT workers have been harassed or discriminated against by a colleague. A quarter have been discriminated against by their manager, and around one in seven by a client or patient. That rises to nearly half of all trans workers experiencing bullying or harassment at work. Seven in ten LGBT workers have experienced sexual harassment – and one in eight LBT women have experienced sexual assault or rape at work.

We urge you to consult with unions on a strategy to make sure workplaces are safe for all LGBT+ people. As a minimum, the government should introduce a new duty on employers to protect workers from harassment by customers and clients.

It should also create a specific duty on employers to prevent sexual harassment. And it should reinstate employment tribunals' powers to make wider recommendations to employers, to root out systemic failings and cultures of bullying and harassment. We call for the recruitment of a new LGBT Advisory Panel, with a clear mandate and trade union representation.

We add our voices to those calling for an immediate ban on all forms of conversion therapy, and for a simplified, free, statutory gender-recognition process, based on self-declaration.

We look to the government not only to promote equality and eliminate discrimination against LGBT+ people but also to take a principled lead in building an inclusive culture in words and deeds that supports LGBT+ people's safety, dignity and equality so that LGBT+ people can thrive and live authentically.

The UK can do better. Let's lead the world in LGBT+ equality once again.

Yours sincerely

Frances O'Grady, General Secretary, TUC
Christina McAnea, General Secretary, Unison
Len McCluskey, General Secretary, Unite
Gary Smith, General Secretary, GMB
Mary Bousted, Joint General Secretary, NEU
Paddy Lillis, General Secretary, USDAW
Patrick Roach, General Secretary, NASUWT
Dave Ward, General Secretary, CWU
Mark Serwotka, General Secretary, PCS
Mike Clancy, General Secretary, Prospect
Jo Grady, General Secretary, UCU
Michael Lynch, General Secretary, RMT
Larry Flanagan, General Secretary, EIS
Paul W Fleming, General Secretary, Equity
Claire Sullivan, Director of Employment Relations and Union Services, CSP
Jon Skewes, Executive Director, RCM
Matt Wrack, General Secretary, Fire Brigades Union
Michelle Stanistreet, General Secretary, NUJ
Roy Rickhuss, General Secretary, Community
Horace Trubridge, General Secretary, MU
Nicola Hubert, General Secretary, POA
Paul Whiteman, General Secretary, NAHT
Ged Nichols, General Secretary, Accord
Mick Whelan, General Secretary, ASLEF
Manuel Cortes, General Secretary, TSSA
Dave Penman, General Secretary, FDA
Sarah Woolley, General Secretary, BFAWU
Mark Dickinson, General Secretary, Nautilus International
Tim Rose, General Secretary, Nationwide Group Staff Union

Steve Jamieson, General Secretary, Royal College of Podiatry
Andy Burman, General Secretary, BDA
Zita Holbourne, Joint National Chair, Artists' Union England
Ian Lawrence, General Secretary, NAPO
Brian Linn, General Secretary, Aegis the Union
Paul Donaldson, General Secretary, HCSA
Sam Aitkenhead, General Secretary, British Orthoptic Society
Michele Gregson, General Secretary, NSEAD
Julia Georgiou, Chair, NHBC Staff Association
Michael Schwaabe, President, The Association of Flight Attendants
Maria Exall, Chair, TUC LGBT+ Committee
Gloria Mills, Chair, TUC Race Relations Committee
Dave Allan and Ann Galpin, Co-Chairs, TUC Disabled Workers Committee
Sue Ferns, Chair, TUC Womens Committee
Patrick Roach, Chair, TUC Anti-Racism Task Force