

March 30, 2016

***DCVB strongly opposes HB2, which opens the door to discrimination against LGBTQ individuals and denies them legal protection from prejudice based on sexual orientation or gender identity.***

***We believe the citizens of Durham overwhelmingly reject discrimination and support protecting the basic human rights of all people. Durham's success is built on acceptance and celebration of people from all backgrounds and beliefs.***

***Durham has a long history of embracing diversity and inclusivity and will remain a welcoming, accepting, LGBTQ-friendly community.***

On March 23, 2016 the North Carolina General Assembly passed and Governor Pat McCrory signed into law the Public Facilities Privacy & Security Act, also known as HB2. The bill was introduced, debated, and signed into law in a 12-hour period.

The Durham Convention & Visitors Bureau (DCVB) has received comments from meeting planners and visitors who are concerned about the law and its impact because it preempts Durham's local ordinances prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.

After reaching out to visitor-facing businesses, we have not identified a single business that intends to change its practices and discriminate against LGBTQ individuals. In fact, many have affirmed the opposite. None of the lawmakers representing Durham supported or voted for this legislation.

After convening a meeting of its Board of Directors on March 30, 2016, the above statement was issued by DCVB.

We have heard that some individuals feel compelled to boycott the state in condemnation of a law they deem offensive and unfair. While we understand the sentiment, we don't believe that the lawmakers who passed this bill will be enlightened or even troubled by this action.

We hope you will consider that businesses and individuals in cities and counties like Durham have been on the front lines of fighting this kind of intolerance and will suffer economic loss. We urge careful consideration of the impacts of boycotting travel to Durham and other progressive cities across North Carolina.

A broad range of Durham citizens have actively fought for and supported LGBTQ rights for decades. It is our sincere hope that people from around the world will continue to visit because travel breaks down barriers of misunderstanding and disrespect, which helps fight fear and bigotry.