

Rt Hon Liz Truss MP
Minister for Women & Equalities
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6 July 2021

Dear Minister

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 our 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