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MAYOR EMANUEL INTRODUCES RESOLUTION TO CITY COUNCIL

REAFFIRMING CITY'S TRAVEL BAN TO NORTH CAROLINA DUE TO DISCRIMINATORY LAW

Chicago's ban on non-essential travel to North Carolina by City employees remains intact until LGBTQ individuals receive full protection

Today, Mayor Rahm Emanuel reaffirmed the City of Chicago's commitment to preventing discrimination against any and all groups by introducing a resolution to City Council that reaffirms the City's policy barring travel by city employees to North Carolina despite recent action by the state to amend its bathroom policy. Just over a year ago, Mayor Emanuel issued the original ban on non-essential travel to North Carolina to renounce the discriminatory impact that the state's bathroom policy placed against transgender individuals.

While the state recently adapted the original bill barring transgender individuals from using the bathrooms consistent with how they identify, this measure does not go far enough in protecting the rights of the broader LGBTQ community.

"As a welcoming city for all, we are clear on our values of tolerance and inclusion, and we won't stand by idly when discriminatory policies threaten the rights of any single group or community," said Mayor Emanuel. "Until North Carolina acknowledges the rights of the LGBTQ community and treats all individuals fairly, the City of Chicago will be taking our business elsewhere, and we encourage others to do the same."

Mayor Emanuel doubled down on the City's original 2016 ban of non-essential travel to North Carolina because the state's recent actions to amend its bathroom policy do not explicitly account for the rights of the broader LGBTQ community. Specifically, recent measures prevent local governments and municipalities in the state from passing their own local anti-discrimination laws and replace HB2's discriminatory, anti-transgender bathroom regulations with new regulations that continue to make it difficult for transgender people to access restrooms consistent with their gender identity.

"Today's pledge by Mayor Emanuel to uphold the travel ban to North Carolina demonstrates that Chicago remains committed to protecting all groups from discrimination," said Mona Noriega, Chair and Commissioner of the Commission on Human Relations. "We have made so much progress toward improving inclusion of LGBTQ individuals in recent years, and this action makes clear that Chicago stands up for the rights of all individuals and against discrimination in any form."

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Last year, the administration took swift action in response to the passage of a North Carolina law which prohibited local governments from passing laws to protect members of the LGBTQ community, directing City department heads to restrict any City-funded or other travel by an employee representing the City of Chicago to the State of North Carolina. Since then, Chicago has ceased authorizing new travel to the state in conducting city business, except for in rare instances of contractual agreements and those required to enforce Chicago law.

“Today’s commitment by Mayor Emanuel shows that Chicago will not tolerate discrimination,” said 44th Ward Alderman and LGBT Caucus chair, Tom Tunney. “While it’s unfortunate that discriminatory practices are being upheld by the State of North Carolina, the City Council stands with people regardless of sexuality or gender identity, and is steadfastly committed to ensuring Chicago remains a haven for all people.”

This is just the latest action taken by the Mayor to combat discrimination against LGBTQ and transgender individuals. Since 2011, a series of policies have been implemented to secure the overall inclusion and rights of the LGBTQ community and to prevent discrimination throughout the city of Chicago. These include the city’s own bathroom protection policy and landmark transgender health care reforms.

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