



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Pennsylvania Secretary of Health Dr. Rachel Levine Addresses Transphobic Comments towards LGBTQ Community

Harrisburg, PA – Secretary of Health Dr. Rachel Levine today addressed the transphobic comments directed towards the LGBTQ community in Pennsylvania.

Pictures and video available of this address are available [here](#) for download.

The following are the remarks shared by Dr. Levine:

“Good afternoon. Thank you for joining us for the latest update today on COVID-19.

“Before I begin with the daily updates there is an important issue that I need to address:

“I feel that I must personally respond to the multiple incidents of LGBTQ harassment and specifically transphobia directed at me that have been reported in the press.

“I would first like to sincerely thank Governor Wolf for his continued support and [comments](#) last week. The LGBTQ community has made so much progress under Governor Wolf’s leadership during his time in office.

“But I want to emphasize that while these individuals may think they are only expressing their displeasure with me, they are in fact hurting the thousands of LGBTQ Pennsylvanians who suffer directly from these current demonstrations of harassment.

“Your actions perpetuate a spirit of intolerance and discrimination against LGBTQ individuals and specifically transgender individuals.

“It is only one month ago that the Supreme Court prohibited discrimination in the workplace due to sexual orientation and gender identity.

“But LGBTQ individuals still can be denied housing and public accommodations in most places in Pennsylvania that do not have local nondiscrimination ordinances.

“In addition, the most vulnerable among us continue to suffer including, LGBTQ individuals of color, LGBTQ youth and seniors, and LGBTQ immigrants.

“Transgender women of color continue to be not only harassed but are more likely to suffer violence and even murder.

“We have not made progress unless we have all made progress.

“It is in this space that these acts of intolerance live and where we need to continue to work against intolerance and discrimination.

“To the perpetrators of these actions, if your apologies are sincerely given, then I accept your apologies.

“But an apology is the beginning, not the end of the conversation.

“I call on you, and all Pennsylvanians, to work towards a spirit of not just tolerance but a spirit of acceptance and welcoming towards LGBTQ individuals.

“We all need to foster that spirit of acceptance and welcoming to LGBTQ individuals and celebrate the wonderful diversity of our commonwealth.

“Our children are watching. They are watching what we do and they are watching how we act.

“To all LGBTQ young people, it is okay to be you. It is okay to stand up for your rights and your freedoms.

“As for me...

“I have no room in my heart for hatred and frankly I do not have time for intolerance.

“My heart is full with a burning desire to help people and my time is full with working towards protecting the public health of everyone in Pennsylvania from the impact of the global pandemic due to COVID-19.

“And I will stay laser focused on that goal.”

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