



STATE OF WASHINGTON  
OFFICE OF GOVERNOR JAY INSLEE

March 24, 2021

**TO:** All Executive and Small Cabinet Agencies

**FROM:** Jay Inslee, Governor

**SUBJECT:** LIFTING PROHIBITION ON PUBLIC TRAVEL TO NORTH CAROLINA

Washington State has a strong history of prohibiting discrimination and promoting diversity and inclusion. The Washington Law Against Discrimination (WLAD), Ch. 49.60 RCW, guarantees for all Washingtonians the right to be free from discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin, sex, honorably discharged veteran or military status, sexual orientation, or the presence of any sensory, mental, or physical disability or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal by a person with a disability.

In 2016, following Charlotte, North Carolina's passage of an anti-discrimination ordinance that allowed transgender individuals to use gender-specific facilities consistent with their gender identity, the state of North Carolina passed H.B. 2, legislation that revoked these civil rights protections. It preempted nondiscrimination ordinances passed by local governments, clarified that sexual orientation and identity are not protected classes, and allowed discrimination against individuals, including Washingtonians traveling to North Carolina for work-related purposes.

In turn, I issued an order prohibiting executive and small cabinet agencies from funding non-essential travel to North Carolina, "so long as the recently approved H.B. 2 exists in its current form." Then in 2017, North Carolina replaced H.B. 2 with a half-measure, H.B. 142, which preempted governments from enacting rules on bathrooms, showers, and changing rooms, and it also prohibited governments from enacting ordinances protecting the LGBT community in private employment practices or public accommodations until December 2020.

My March 29, 2016, order was lifted with the passage of H.B. 142. But because H.B. 142 contained similar troubling, discriminatory provisions, and Washingtonians traveling to North Carolina for work still faced state discrimination, in April 2017, I again prohibited executive or small-cabinet agency personnel from publicly funded non-essential travel to North Carolina.

But since December 2020, when the period of state preemption lifted that precluded local governments from passing ordinances protecting the civil rights of those in the LGBT community, many North Carolina jurisdictions have passed pro-LGBT protections. Given this forward movement, today, I am lifting my April 13, 2017, travel advisory which prohibited executive branch and small cabinet personnel from taking publicly funded non-essential travel to North Carolina.