

June 18, 2021

University of California Board of Regents
Office of the Secretary and Chief of Staff to the Regents
1111 Franklin St., 12th Floor
Oakland, CA 94607
regentsoffice@ucop.edu

Michael V. Drake
President, University of California
University of California Office of the President
1111 Franklin St., 12th Floor
Oakland, CA 94607
president@ucop.edu

Via e-mail and U.S. mail

RE: UC policy relating to policy-based restrictions on health care

To the Regents and President of the University of California:

As organizations that work to ensure equal treatment for LGBTQ+ people and access to comprehensive reproductive health care throughout the nation and in California, we write to express our deep concern that UC Health continues to defend, and seeks to perpetuate and expand, contracts that tie the hands of University of California clinicians and students, preventing them from providing fundamental health care to their patients. These contracts place UC clinicians and students in facilities where they are subject to policy-based restrictions like the Ethical and Religious Directives for Health Care Services, which prohibit basic reproductive health care—characterizing it as “intrinsically evil”—and directly exclude LGBTQ+ patients.

Reproductive and LGBTQ-inclusive care is essential healthcare, and UC's attempts to characterize the care that is denied under its restrictive contracts as "elective" use the same dangerous framing being weaponized across the country by those seeking to erect access barriers and impose outright bans on this care.

The University of California has long positioned itself as a strong defender of evidence-based, inclusive, and bias-free health care. Now more than ever, UC needs to hew to these values as the national landscape becomes increasingly dire. This year has seen an unprecedented number of bills sweeping state legislatures that would curtail the rights of LGBTQ+ people, particularly trans and non-binary youth. Twenty-one anti-LGBTQ+ bills were signed into law, including a ban on gender-affirming care for minors in Arkansas. Similarly, access to reproductive health care, particularly abortion care, is increasingly imperiled, with over 300 bills introduced,

advanced, or passed to ban or restrict abortion in 2021 alone, and with the U.S. Supreme Court's recent decision to hear a direct challenge to *Roe v. Wade*.

In this context, the University of California's decision as to whether it will continue to participate in denials of care will be closely watched and have strong reverberations both inside California and nationally. We strongly believe that, as a public entity with an obligation to provide care that is evidence-based, free of discrimination, and not restricted by religious doctrine, UC must draw a firm line. We urge you to adopt a policy that would empower UC Health providers and immediately prohibit any expansion of policy-based restrictions on UC clinicians and students. We further urge that, within three years, you close out or modify existing contracts to eliminate the existing restrictions on UC-provided care.

Sincerely,

ACCESS REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE

ACCE Action

ACLU California Action

ACLU of Northern California

ACLU of San Diego and Imperial Counties

ACLU of Southern California

American Atheists

American Civil Liberties Union

Americans United for Separation of Church and State

Asian Americans Advancing Justice - CA

Atheists United

Bay Area Lawyers for Individual Freedom

BiNet USA

Black Women for Wellness

BreastfeedLA

CA Nurse-Midwives Association

California Latinas for Reproductive Justice

California LGBTQ Health and Human Services Network

California National Organization for Women

California Pan-Ethnic Health Network (CPEHN)

California Women's Law Center

Catholics for Choice

Center for LGBTQ Economic Advancement & Research (CLEAR)

Child Care Law Center

Citizens For Choice

Consumer Attorneys of California

Contra Costa Atheists and Freethinkers

Courage California

Drug Policy Alliance

Ella Baker Center for Human Rights

Equal Rights Advocates

Equality California

Family Equality
GLMA: Health Professionals Advancing LGBTQ Equality
Guttmacher Institute
Health Access California
Hollywood NOW
Human Rights Campaign
Humanist Society of Santa Barbara
If/When/How: Lawyering for Reproductive Justice
In Our Own Voice: National Black Women's Reproductive Justice Agenda
Indivisible CA: StateStrong
Indivisible SF
Ipas
Jewish Center for Justice
Lambda Legal
Los Angeles LGBT Center
Lutheran Office of Public Policy California
Medical Students for Choice
Modern Military Association of America
NARAL Pro-Choice America
NARAL Pro-Choice California
National Abortion Federation
National Birth Equity Collaborative
National Center for Lesbian Rights
National Center for Transgender Equality
National Center for Youth Law
National Coalition for LGBTQ Health
National Council of Jewish Women
National Council of Jewish Women, Greater Long Beach & West Orange County Section
National Council of Jewish Women, Los Angeles
National Equality Action Team (NEAT)
National Health Law Program
National Women's Law Center
Orange County Equality Coalition
Our Family Coalition
Pacific Pride Foundation
PFLAG National
Physicians for Reproductive Health
Planned Parenthood Affiliates of California
Power to Decide
Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice California
ROC California
Sacramento LGBT Community Center
SEIU California
SIECUS: Sex Ed for Social Change
Silver State Equality-Nevada
TEACH - Training in Early Abortion for Comprehensive Healthcare

UAW Local 2865

UAW Local 5810

UC Coalition on Reproductive Justice

United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Western States Council

URGE: Unite for Reproductive & Gender Equity

Voices for Progress

Western Center on Law & Poverty

Women For: Orange County

Women's Foundation of California

Working Partnerships USA