

Testimony in support of HB 7359 AN ACT CONCERNING A LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, TRANSGENDER AND QUEER HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES NETWORK

March 21, 2019

Senator Moore, Representative Abercrombie and honorable members of the Human Services Committee. My name is Kia A Baird of Gales Ferry, CT and Vice President and Founding Board Member of OutCT testifying in support of HB 7359 AN ACT CONCERNING A LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, TRANSGENDER AND QUEER HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES NETWORK.

OutCT is an LBGTQIA Organization that Serves Southeastern CT. OutCT's Mission is building a community through educational, cultural, and social programming that promotes acceptance, tolerance and understanding of all sexual orientations and gender identities.

I have close to 15 years of experience working in the human services field in Southeastern Connecticut and was one of the founding members of OutCT which was established in 2013. Through my years working with both non-profit organizations in our region and working to start an organization like OutCT I can see many areas of overlap. The health and security of any community is vital to that community's ability to engage, to contribute to the economic wellbeing of the region and to positively impact the community as a whole. I am in full support of HB 7359 because I believe that it is imperative that we invest in and create safe spaces for the LGBT people in our community. Establishing a network of human services that is charged with better understanding the needs of LGBT community members will allow our state to provide necessary and quality resources to an increasing population in Connecticut. Moving this bill forward, joining New York and California who have already had successful implementations, will allow Connecticut to be on the forefront, again setting precedent that many states will soon follow.

I urge the committee to vote favorably in support of HB 7359 to address the needs of the LGBTQ+ community in Connecticut and build a healthier and safer environment for the community. Thank you for your consideration.

Regards

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