



MAYOR REX RICHARDSON

June 6, 2024

The Honorable Scott Wiener
California State Senate
1021 O Street, Suite 8620
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Support for SB 957 (Wiener) – Data collection: sexual orientation and gender identity

Dear Senator Wiener,

On behalf of the City of Long Beach (City), I write in support of SB 957, which would require the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) to collect sexual orientation, gender identity, and intersexuality (SOGI) data from third-party entities, including local health jurisdictions by July 2026. This legislation aligns with the City's effort to collect SOGI data, which assists the City in improving services or program outcomes for the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) community.

Current law requires specified state departments, including CDPH, to collect and report voluntarily provided self-identification SOGI data when collecting other demographic data, such as ethnicity, age, and race. However, a 2023 State audit found that the CDPH has been slow to adopt and enforce standardized definitions, guidelines, and training to ensure the consistent collection and reporting of SOGI data, which has limited its ability to identify and address health disparities among the LGBTQ community.

SB 957 would implement the recommendations from the audit report by amending existing law to require, rather than permit, CDPH to collect demographic data, including SOGI data, from third parties, including, but not limited to, local health jurisdictions, on any forms or electronic data systems, unless prohibited by federal or state law. For the eleventh consecutive year, the City of Long Beach has been named one of the best cities in the nation for LGBTQ inclusion in municipal law and policy, earning both a perfect score and 11 bonus points in the 2022 Human Rights Campaign Foundation's Municipal Equality Index (MEI). Long Beach was one of 506 cities nationwide to be scored and one of 120 to achieve a perfect score. SB 957 will help maintain that title by ensuring that collection of SOGI data provides vital understanding and insight into the health needs and disparities that exist among the LGBTQ community.

For these reasons, the City supports SB 957.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rex Richardson", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Mayor Rex Richardson
City of Long Beach

cc: The Honorable Lena Gonzalez, State Senate, 33rd District
The Honorable Mike Gipson, State Assembly, 65th District
The Honorable Josh Lowenthal, State Assembly, 69th District