



MAYOR REX RICHARDSON

September 9, 2024

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Support for SB 957 (Wiener)—Data collection: sexual orientation, gender identity, and intersex status

Dear Governor Newsom,

On behalf of the City of Long Beach (City), I urge your signature on SB 957. This bill would require the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) to collect sexual orientation, gender identity, and variations in sex characteristics/intersex status (SOGISC) data from third-party entities, including local health jurisdictions by March 2029. This legislation aligns with the City's effort to collect SOGISC 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 SOGISC 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 SOGISC 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 SOGISC 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 SOGISC data provides vital understanding and insight into the health needs and disparities that exist among the LGBTQ community.

For these reasons, the City requests your signature on SB 957.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rex Richardson", with a long horizontal flourish 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