

Ellen Corbett

State Senator; District 10; Democratic Party

I am sorry I could not be here today, but I believe in the importance of the Tri-City Health Center to our community and the work you have done to treat our gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community.

Access to healthcare is getting harder and harder everyday, but the Tri-Center Health Center and our other local community health clinics are making sure that no matter what your economic status – your ethnicity, your gender, gender identity, your illness or sexual preference – you have access to health care. You are a true safety net to our community. We need to support your work because without our health clinics many people could not access the health care treatment they need.

As the provider to our most vulnerable citizens, our community clinics need to be funded so they have the facilities, medicine and trained professionals they need to treat the special needs of our diverse community.

Although I was not in the Legislature these past two years, I am proud of the accomplishments of my former and future colleagues who this year and last passed legislation:

- To strengthen the state's ability to respond to the needs of LGBT seniors by including them in the list of groups that the Department of Aging assesses and plans for;
- To prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity in state operated or funded services, activities and programs;
- To appropriate money to develop and support education and services specific to LGBT domestic violence;

- To eliminate the “panic strategy” that allowed defendants to contend they were provoked to murder by discovering the victim’s disability, gender, nationality, race, ethnicity, religion or sexual orientation of the victim;
- To protect people from discrimination by business establishments regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity or marital status; and
- To allow registered domestic partners who were public employees to select their partner to receive a death benefit should the retiree pre-decease their partner.

We have many important struggles ahead to fight for equality for all Californians. We need to educate people about the LGBT community and work at stopping the discrimination and violence against the LGBT community. In the Bay Area alone, we have three unsolved LGBT murders. That is inexcusable.

Today I pledge to you that I will work with the LGBT community in the Senate over the next eight years to improve our laws, educate the public on LGBT issues and fight for justice for this community.

Thank you.