



# Frequently Asked Questions

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## **HOW WERE THESE CITIES CHOSEN?**

This year, the cities rated are: the 50 state capitals, the 150 largest cities in the United States, the 3 largest cities or municipalities in each state, the city home to the state's largest public university (including undergraduate and graduate enrollment) and 75 cities and municipalities that have high proportions of same-sex couples (see page 16 for more information). Future editions of the *Municipal Equality Index* will continue to increase the number of cities rated.

## **DID YOU KNOW THAT \_\_\_ ISN'T A CITY?**

Yes. A few of the places rated in the MEI are "census-designated places" that are not incorporated as cities. In that case, we rated the local government that actually serves that census-designated place, which is usually the county. This is explained further on page 16.

## **HOW ARE THE SCORES CALCULATED?**

Cities are rated on a scale of 0-100, based on the city's laws, policies, benefits, and services. There are 100 standard points and 20 bonus points (bonus points are awarded for programming or actions that apply to some but not all cities). For more information on the scoring system, see page 17.

## **WHERE DID THE INFORMATION FOR THESE SCORES COME FROM?**

The MEI team conducted the research, compiled it into a draft scorecard, and sent it to the city for review. Cities had an opportunity to review the draft scorecard and offer any feedback prior to publication.

## **CAN ONLY CITIES IN STATES WITH GOOD LAWS GET GOOD SCORES?**

Definitely not. The MEI was specifically designed to measure the laws and policies of the municipality, not the state. While state law might add to a city's score, positive state law is not necessary for a city to score 100 points. In fact, some cities without positive state law did score 100 points in this year's index.

## **IS THIS A RANKING OF THE BEST CITIES FOR LGBT PEOPLE TO LIVE IN?**

No. This is not a ranking of a city's atmosphere or quality of life. It is an evaluation of the city's laws and policies and an examination of how inclusive city services are of LGBT people. Some high-scoring cities may not feel truly welcoming for all LGBT people, and some low-scoring cities may feel more welcoming than their policies might reflect.

# Research Process

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The information reflected in this publication was gathered by the MEI team and compiled into draft scorecards using publicly available information. Cities were then offered an opportunity to review the scorecards, ask any questions, and submit any additional information they wished for the MEI team to consider.

Our team sent out a letter by email and certified mail in April to mayors and city managers notifying them that their cities were being rated. The letter was followed by a draft scorecard sent to the mayors and city managers in July also via email and certified mail.

The feedback window lasted several months. Finally, cities were sent their final scorecards and information about the 2014 MEI in the same way. Equality Federation Institute state groups also were able to review the scorecards and provide feedback to the MEI team.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## An Introduction

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- 4 A Letter from Chad Griffin, President of the Human Rights Campaign Foundation
- 5 A Letter from Rebecca Isaacs, Executive Director of the Equality Federation Institute
- 6 "Enduring Growth for Cities Is Driven by Diversity," by Richard Florida

## How It Works

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- 12 Executive Summary
- 14 2013 MEI Scorecard
- 16 City Selection
- 17 Scoring Criteria Parts I - VI
- 26 Acknowledging Context
  - Not All Cities Are Created Equal
  - Accounting for City Size
  - Balancing State and Local Laws
  - Understanding Restrictive State Law
  - Effect of Enforcement and Lived Experience

## What We Found

---

- 38 Summary of Results
- 41 Table of 2013 Scores
- 54 Take Action for Equality
- 55 Changes to the MEI in 2014
- 58 Acknowledgements

## Success Stories

---

- 13 San Antonio, Texas by Mayor Julian Castro
- 18 Missoula, Montana by City Councilmember Caitlin Copple
- 22 Equality Maryland by Executive Director Carrie Evans
- 29 Atlanta, Georgia by Mayor Kasim Reed
- 40 Fairness Campaign by Executive Director Chris Hartman
- 44 South Carolina Equality by Executive Director Ryan Wilson
- 49 Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce by Director of Public Policy Joe Grace
- 53 Equality Ohio by Deputy Executive Director Kim Welter





# Dear Friends

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The message is clear. Equality isn't just for the coasts anymore. Real leadership is happening from Atlanta to Missoula to Salt Lake City and everywhere in between.

**Between last year's inaugural edition of the *Municipal Equality Index* and this year's second installation, equality for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people has taken unprecedented steps forward.**

What's more, this year's MEI reveals that our progress this year didn't begin and end at the U.S. Supreme Court—it reached cities and towns in each and every state in this country.

From Vicco, Kentucky to Coeur d'Alene, Idaho to San Antonio, Texas, fairness and equality are surging ahead. In every corner of America, local governments are taking action, even where statewide protections are missing. For the first time, Southern cities are among those scoring 100 points on the MEI.

This summer's historic Supreme Court rulings underscored the fact that there are two Americas when it comes to LGBT issues—one America (mostly

on the coasts) where legal equality for LGBT people is nearly a reality, and another America where even the most basic statewide legal protections are non-existent. Yet the 2013 MEI reveals that, even in this second America, **municipalities are leading a quiet pro-equality transformation.**

Forty-two percent of the 78 million people who live in MEI-rated cities have more comprehensive legal protections at the local level than they do at the state level. Ninety-four percent of those have local laws that are more inclusive of transgender and gender non-conforming people.

As the MEI enters its third year, we want to continue this race to the top. We offer this edition as a blueprint for progress—a roadmap for cities that are motivated by moral and economic imperatives to treat their LGBT citizens with the same dignity as everyone else. As HRC Foundation fights for equality everywhere, for everyone, we hope that

the MEI continues to inspire progress in cities across the country—until those two Americas are united under a single banner of fairness and equality.

Finally, HRC Foundation offers a heartfelt thank you to our partners at the Equality Federation for their leadership and partnership on the MEI. This report is a testament to the important work that is going on in towns, cities, and states across the country, and HRC Foundation is committed to continuing to support these vital efforts until full equality reaches every person in every town in all 50 states.

Sincerely,

**CHAD GRIFFIN**

President  
Human Rights Campaign Foundation

# Dear Readers

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Municipal victories aren't simply making cities and counties more inclusive places to live, work, and build a family. They're also fueling the movement for equality in states across this nation.

**This year marks the second edition of the *Municipal Equality Index (MEI)*, and the Equality Federation is proud to partner with the Human Rights Campaign Foundation to release this critical report.** In just one year, we've already seen significant advances toward equality in cities and counties in every corner of this nation.

In communities across this country, advocates and activists are winning critical support at the municipal level for policies that truly improve the lives of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people.

As you will see in the 2013 MEI report, we've seen incredible leadership from local lawmakers—from enacting discrimination protections and recognizing domestic partners to providing training to government officials and ensuring that the LGBT community is always included.

**Local leaders are taking important steps to provide LGBT people with the protections and security they're denied by statewide and federal laws.** And because of this leadership, many cities and counties are emerging as welcoming communities where LGBT people are treated with the dignity and respect they've always deserved.

In addition to providing real protections for LGBT people living our communities, local campaigns contribute significantly to movement building efforts in each state. They provide opportunities to engage in positive, productive public education. They strengthen the capacity of our movement organizations and expand the skills of our leaders. They build political momentum and create political allies.

In a year when we've seen historic victories at both the federal and state level, it's easy to forget about these local wins. But while they may not have the far-reaching implications of a Supreme Court ruling or command the excitement of a bill signing, they're worth celebrating.

**Every local win puts us one step closer to full and lasting equality in every state.**

Thank you to the local leaders, to the state-based LGBT advocacy organizations, to HRC Foundation and our national partners, and to the activists who worked so hard to bring about the advances detailed in this year's *Municipal Equality Index*. It's because of you that we have much to celebrate.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rebecca Isaacs". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**REBECCA ISAACS**

Executive Director  
Equality Federation Institute

# Enduring Growth for Cities is Driven by Diversity



©Jaime Hogge

Openness and tolerance are not just moral imperatives they are economic ones as well. A key indicator of that is openness to the LGBT community.

Cities used to think they could generate jobs and economic growth by luring companies with huge tax abatements and other subsidies. But today, more and more we know that **enduring growth for cities and for nations comes from an open, diverse, tolerant social environment that is appealing to a diverse range of creative and talented people.**

Nowadays, it's not just people who relocate to be near businesses; businesses will move to take advantage of dense clusters of talent. The roughly 50 million members of the creative class—the scientists, engineers, and entrepreneurs, researchers and academics, architects and designers, artists, entertainers and professionals in business, media, management, healthcare and law—cluster in cities that have competitive/collaborative ecosystems that inspire and stimulate innovation, and enabling infrastructures that allow their ideas to be brought swiftly and efficiently to market.

The creative class cannot be bound by the social categories—of race, gender, ethnicity, sexual

orientation and more—that we as a society have imposed on ourselves.

**Creativity—and economic growth—require diversity.**

I've boiled it down to a formula I call the 3Ts of economic growth. Thriving, prosperous communities are strong across all 3 Ts—technology, talent and tolerance to prosper and thrive. Openness to the LGBT community is a key indicator of this kind of tolerance and openness.

The research I've conducted with Gary Gates of UCLA's Williams Institute has shown that embracing the LGBT community isn't just the morally right thing to do; it is an economic growth imperative.

When a city is inclusive of LGBT people, it sends a signal that it is diverse and meritocratic, that it embraces differences of all kinds. This is a message that resonates with more than just LGBT people. The Fortune 500 has long recognized this, which is why 62 percent of them offer domestic partner benefits, 88 percent prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual

orientation, and 57 percent prohibit discrimination on the basis of gender identity. Offering these benefits and protections gives these companies an edge when it comes to attracting and retaining talented people, whether they are LGBT or not. The same applies to cities.

The *Municipal Equality Index* offers an important benchmark for LGBT and straight people alike who are choosing where to locate, and for cities who understand the value of investing in equality.

## **RICHARD FLORIDA**

Director of the Martin Prosperity Institute at the University of Toronto's Rotman School of Management; Global Research Professor at New York University, and Senior Editor with *The Atlantic*

# Why Cities Should Invest in Equality

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**Beyond the important issues of fairness and equality lies an additional reason for cities to take matters of equality seriously: it is good for business.**

Cities are in constant competition for residents, business, and employees: inclusiveness is an important factor that attracts all three. A growing body of research has shown that cities that have vibrant gay and lesbian communities have **higher levels of income, life satisfaction, housing values, and emotional attachment to their community** as well as higher concentrations of high-tech business.

Richard Florida's fascinating work on this subject reveals a link between a city's inclusivity and its ability to attract top talent and innovative business.

The Fortune 500 has long recognized that top talent is attracted to inclusiveness. In fact, the private sector has been using fair workplaces as a tool to recruit and retain top talent for years, **because fair workplaces enhance an employer's reputation, increase job satisfaction, and boost employee morale.**

Cities are subject to the same incentives for their employees, and must compete with the private sector in offering inclusive policies and benefits for their LGBT employees or risk losing their best employees to more inclusive employers. Cities would be well-advised to respond to the workplace considerations measured by the MEI, some of which are associated with minimal cost and pay dividends in productivity and retention.

The competition to attract new business will only get more fierce as the disparity between the two Americas—the one America where states offer near-legal equality for LGBT people and the other where even the most basic state protections do not exist—continues to grow. Businesses will increasingly have to evaluate the legal landscape offered by a potential new location in their calculation of where to expand operations. In the America where state protections are weak, cities are under additional competitive pressure to institute municipal protections that make up for the deficiencies at the state level.

Businesses will increasingly have to evaluate the legal landscape offered by a potential new location in their calculation of where to expand operations.





# CITIES RATED BY THE MEI

The Municipal Equality Index rates municipalities of varying sizes drawn from every state in the nation.

## 2012

137 CITIES WITH A  
POPULATION TOTAL OF  
55,853,651

## 2013

SAME 137 FROM 2012  
PLUS MORE THAN DOUBLE  
THE NUMBER FOR A TOTAL  
OF 291 CITIES WITH A  
POPULATION TOTAL OF  
77,851,822





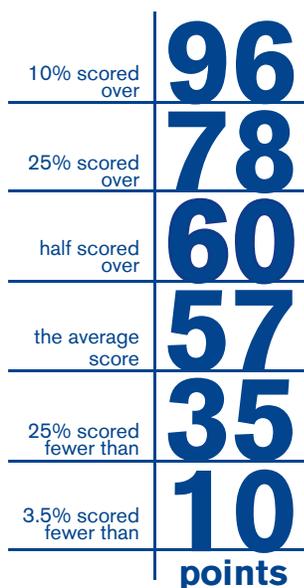
# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Momentum for Municipal Equality

This year cities across the country, including in Idaho, Kentucky, Georgia, Montana, and Missouri, continued to prove that municipalities will act to support equality for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people even where states and the federal government have failed to do so.

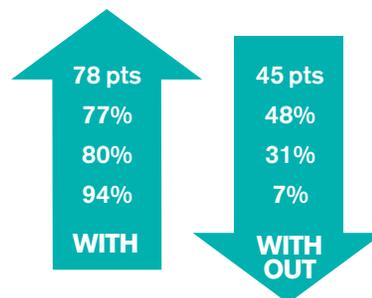
These cities reflect a movement that is happening at the local level across the country. *The Municipal Equality Index* demonstrates the ways that many cities can—and do—serve the LGBT people who live and work in those cities. **The results of this year's evaluation tell the story of the momentum of municipal equality**

- In 2012 we rated 137 cities with a total population of 55,853,651; in 2013 we rated 291 cities with a population total of 77,851,822.
- 25 cities received perfect scores (100 points) in 2013; 11 did in 2012.
- Of cities that scored 100, 8 cities came from states without comprehensive relationship recognition and without statewide non-discrimination laws; 2 did in 2012.



### THE PRESENCE OF AN OPENLY LGBT ELECTED OR APPOINTED OFFICIAL IS CORRELATED TO HIGHER SCORES

**Average Score**  
**Fully Inclusive Non-Discrimination Law**  
**City Employee Non-Discrimination Policy**  
**City Employee Domestic Partner Benefits**



### MUNICIPALITIES ACT WHERE STATES HAVE NOT

Municipal law provides powerful protections, especially to transgender and gender non-conforming people.

- Of the 78 million people living in MEI rated cities, 33 million of these have more comprehensive municipal laws than state laws, and
- 31 million have gender identity or expression protections at the municipal level that they do not have on the state level.

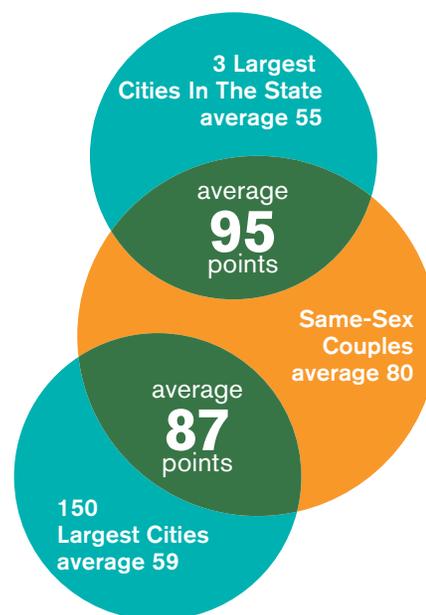
### LGBT LIAISONS

Cities that have LGBT liaisons in their police department significantly outperformed the national average.

- 95% of all 2013 cities with liaisons reported hate crimes statistics including sexual orientation motivated crimes to the FBI, and
- 72% of 2013 rated cities without liaisons reported.

### CITIES WITH SAME-SEX COUPLES EXCELLED

Cities with high proportions of same-sex couples tended to outperform other cities, regardless of city size; however, larger cities with a high proportion of same sex couples did exceptionally well.



# SUCCESS STORY: SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS



When it comes to issues of equality, our nation's cities are leading the charge because we know that prosperous cities gain great economic strength from celebrating and cultivating diversity.

At a time when partisanship too often trumps practical policy in our national and state legislative bodies, municipalities are leading the way on key issues that impact the day-to-day lives of most Americans. When it comes to issues of equality, our nation's cities are leading the charge because we know that prosperous cities gain great economic strength from celebrating and cultivating diversity.

In that regard, **San Antonio is the new face of the American Dream.** As the nation's 7th largest city (as well as one of the fastest growing cities in the United States), San Antonio has taken important steps to ensure there are no second-class citizens. This year we passed a wide-ranging ordinance that prohibited discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity in housing, public accommodations, city contracting, and city employment. I am proud that this improved San Antonio's MEI score from a 48 in 2012 to an 86 in 2013. By taking

this proactive approach, we have made it perfectly clear that San Antonio is a welcoming and inviting city that is ready to compete in the 21st century global economy.

As with other civil rights struggles, the road to inclusion can be challenging, but **history is the ultimate judge.**

I believe that the same principle applies to today's struggle for LGBT equality and it is my hope that generations to come will continue to build upon the progress that has been made to ensure equality under the law for every citizen.

**JULIAN CASTRO**  
Mayor

# 2013 MEI SCORECARD



## CITY, STATE 1/2 2013 MUNICIPAL EQUALITY INDEX SCORECARD

### I. Non-Discrimination Laws

This category evaluates whether discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity is prohibited by the city, county, or state in areas of employment, housing, and public accommodations.

	STATE	COUNTY	CITY	AVAILABLE
Employment	0/0	0/0	0/0	3/3
Housing	0/0	0/0	0/0	3/3
Public Accommodations	0/0	0/0	0/0	3/3
<b>SCORE</b>				<b>0</b> out of 18

### II. Relationship Recognition

Marriage, civil unions, and comprehensive domestic partnerships are matters of state policy; cities and counties have only the power to create domestic partner registries.

	STATE	COUNTY	CITY	AVAILABLE
Marriage Equality, Civil Unions, or Domestic Partnerships	0			12
Municipal Domestic Partner Registry		0	0	12
<b>SCORE</b>				<b>0</b> out of 12
<b>BONUS</b> Municipality was forced to stop providing a domestic partner registry as a result of restrictive state law.			+0	+2

### III. Municipality as Employer

By offering equivalent benefits and protections to LGBT employees, and by awarding contracts to fair-minded businesses, municipalities commit themselves to treating LGBT employees equally.

	CITY	AVAILABLE
Non-Discrimination in City Employment	0/0	5/5
Domestic Partner Health Benefits	0	4
Legal Dependent Benefits	0	2
Equivalent Family Leave	0	2
City Contractor Non-Discrimination Ordinance	0/0	2/2
City Contractor Equal Benefits Ordinance	0	4
<b>SCORE</b>	<b>0</b> out of 26	
<b>BONUS</b> Grossing Up of Employee Benefits.	+0	+3
<b>BONUS</b> Transgender-Inclusive Healthcare Benefits.	+0	+4
<b>BONUS</b> Municipality is a Welcoming Place to Work.	+0	+2

[hrc.org/mei](http://hrc.org/mei)

## IV. Municipal Services

This section assesses the efforts of the city to ensure LGBT constituents are included in city services and programs.

	STATE	COUNTY	CITY	AVAILABLE
Human Rights Commission			0	7
LGBT Liaison in the Mayor's Office			0	5
Enumerated Anti-Bullying School Policies	0/0	0/0	0/0	3/3
<b>SCORE</b>				<b>0 out of 18</b>
<b>BONUS</b> City provides services to particularly vulnerable populations of the LGBT community.		+0		+2

## V. Law Enforcement

Fair enforcement of the law includes responsible reporting of hate crimes and engaging with the LGBT community in a thoughtful and respectful way.

	CITY	AVAILABLE
LGBT Police Liaison or Task Force	0	8
Reported 2011 Hate Crimes Statistics to the FBI	0	10
<b>SCORE</b>	<b>0 out of 18</b>	

## VI. Relationship with the LGBT Community

This category measures the city leadership's commitment to fully include the LGBT community and to advocate for full equality.

	CITY	AVAILABLE
Leadership's Public Position on LGBT Equality	0	5
Leadership's Pro-Equality Legislative or Policy Efforts	0	3
<b>SCORE</b>	<b>0 out of 8</b>	
<b>BONUS</b> Openly LGBT elected or appointed municipal leaders.	+0	+3
<b>BONUS</b> City engages with the LGBT community.	+0	+2
<b>BONUS</b> Cities are pro-equality despite restrictive state law.	+0	+2

**TOTAL SCORE 0 + TOTAL BONUS 0 = Final Score 0**  
CANNOT EXCEED 100

PTS FOR SEXUAL ORIENTATION  PTS FOR GENDER IDENTITY  BONUS PTS for criteria not accessible to all cities at this time.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT CITY SELECTION, CRITERIA OR THE MEI SCORING SYSTEM, PLEASE REFER TO PAGE 17 OR VISIT [HRC.ORG/MEI](http://HRC.ORG/MEI). All cities rated were provided their scorecard in advance of publication or the opportunity to submit revisions. For feedback regarding a particular city's scorecard, please email [mei@hrc.org](mailto:mei@hrc.org).

[hrc.org/mei](http://hrc.org/mei)

# CITY SELECTION

## How Cities Were Selected for Rating

The 2013 *Municipal Equality Index* rates 291 municipalities, including the 50 state capitals, the three largest cities in each state, the 150 largest cities in the country, the cities home to the state's largest public university (including graduate and undergraduate enrollment), and the 25 small, 25 midsize, and 25 large cities with the highest proportion of same-sex couples.

These 75 cities with highest proportions of same-sex couples are drawn from an analysis of the 2010 census results by the Williams Institute at the UCLA School of Law, which identified the 25 large cities (population exceeding 250,000), 25 mid-size cities (population between 100,000 and 250,000), and 25 small cities (population below 100,000) with the highest proportion of same-sex couples.

Some of these small "cities" are in fact unincorporated census-designated places. To be consistent we rated all 25 of these small cities, even the unincorporated census-designated places, based on the laws and policies of the local level of government applicable (the entity actually rated—for the unincorporated places this is usually the county—will be clearly indicated).

Significant overlap between these categories of cities brings the total number of cities rated in the 2013 MEI to 291. This is more than double the number of cities rated last year, and as the publication goes on the number of cities rated will continue to increase.

### WHY ISN'T WASHINGTON, D.C. RATED?

Washington, D.C. is not rated by the MEI, even though it has a high proportion of same-sex couples and fits into several of the city selection

criteria. Unlike the cities rated in the MEI, however, Washington, D.C. is a federal district.

This means that it has powers and limitations so significantly different from the municipalities the MEI rates that the comparison would be unfair—for example, no city rated by the MEI has the legal capacity to pass marriage equality, as Washington, D.C. did in 2009.

While the District of Columbia is not a state, either, it is more properly compared to a state than it is to a city. For that reason, Washington, D.C. is included in HRC Foundation's annual *Equality From State to State* report.

More information on Washington, D.C.'s laws and policies can be viewed on the maps of state laws located at [www.hrc.org/resources/entry/maps-of-state-laws-policies](http://www.hrc.org/resources/entry/maps-of-state-laws-policies).



# SCORING CRITERIA

## I. Non-Discrimination Laws

**It should not be legal to deny someone the right to work, rent a home, or be served in a place of public accommodation because of his or her sexual orientation or gender identity.**

This category evaluates whether discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity is prohibited within the city in areas of employment, housing, and public accommodations.

In each category, cities receive 3 points for prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and 3 points for prohibiting discrimination on the basis of gender identity. All non-discrimination laws ought to be fully inclusive of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people, and acknowledging sexual orientation-only protections as simply that does not imply they are sufficient; they are not.

**THESE POINTS CAN COME FROM STATE LAW, COUNTY LAW, OR CITY LAW.**

If the state or county has a comprehensive and inclusive non-discrimination law that applies within the city limits, a city may conclude it is an inefficient use of resources to pass a local non-discrimination ordinance. So long as the protections of a state or county law apply within the city limits, the city will be marked as having such protections. If there is no state or county law, but the city has passed an ordinance of its own volition, the city will receive credit for those non-discrimination protections. However, this section is capped at 18 points maximum; therefore, where laws exist at both the city and the state (or county) level, the city will not receive double (or triple) points.



# SUCCESS STORY: MISSOULA, MONTANA



It's called an LGBT movement for a reason. We can and must advance equality at every level of our democracy until LGBT Montanans are treated the same as LGBT Washingtonians.

## WHY THE MISSOULA REGISTRY MATTERS

One of my proudest moments in my two years of service on the Missoula City Council came last June, when we voted unanimously to establish a domestic partnership registry. The unanimous part mattered, because it meant my 11 colleagues believe that my relationship is good enough—that same-sex couples deserve the dignity of public recognition like any other couple. With that vote, my colleagues acknowledged that Montana law is unjust, and that the City of Missoula will do everything it can to be a safe, welcoming, and respectful place for all people, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity.

## LET'S BE HONEST, A DOMESTIC PARTNERSHIP REGISTRY DOESN'T SOUND VERY SEXY

It doesn't carry as much weight as full marriage equality, or even civil unions at the state level. So why even bother doing it?

## HERE'S WHY

- It's called an LGBT movement for a reason. We can and must advance equality at every level of our democracy until LGBT Montanans are treated the same as LGBT Washingtonians. Incremental and inadequate as a city registry may seem, it is an important step on the path to full equality, just as inclusive non-discrimination ordinances pave the way to statewide change.
- It shows the State of Montana that cities will do everything they can for LGBT people despite discriminatory laws. Municipal domestic partnership registries change state policies. We've seen this in 58 other cities across 23 states, many which lacked any relationship recognition prior to the establishment of local registries.
- Municipal domestic partnership registries help same-sex partners get health insurance coverage,

as well as better treatment from first responders and hospitals. Registration doesn't replace the need for statewide mandates or an advanced medical directive (To make sure you have all your bases covered, see: <http://www.hrc.org/resources/entry/protecting-your-visitation-decision-making-rights>). The wallet card offers proof for employers that want to do the right thing despite bad state law, and something that emergency and hospital personnel can point to in your time of need.

## NO ONE SHOULD SETTLE FOR MERE CITY-LEVEL DOMESTIC PARTNERSHIP RECOGNITION.

I'm certainly not going to. That's why I hope you will join me in continuing to support local organizations working on non-discrimination ordinances across Montana, as well as the HRC, which won't rest until LGBT Americans are treated equally in all 50 states.

**CAITLIN COPPLE**

Missoula City Council Member

## II. Relationship Recognition

**Marriage equality, civil unions, and comprehensive domestic partnerships are matters of state policy.**

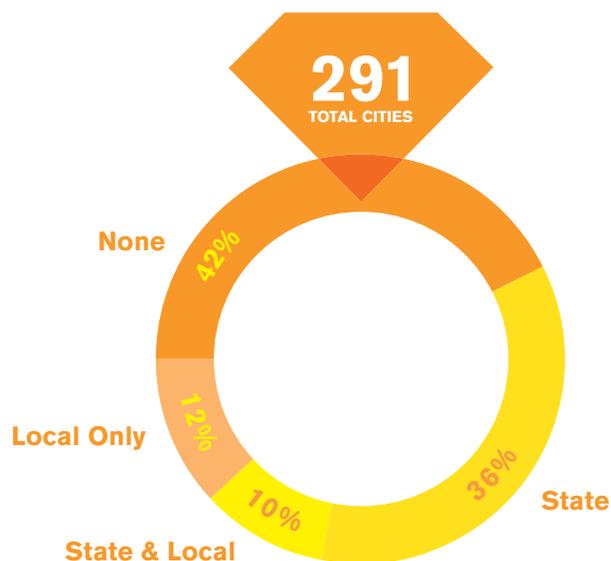
**Cities and counties only have the power to create domestic partner registries** or very limited domestic partnerships. These do not come with all the same benefits as state-level relationship recognition but **they do offer some benefits, privileges, and protections to LGBT people seeking to have their relationships legally recognized.**

Because the MEI is an evaluation of municipalities, not states, and marriage is a state-level policy, this section is weighted so that an equal number of points are awarded for marriage and municipal domestic partner registries. This is a practical matter based on the

scope of municipal power and is not a moral or legal valuation of municipal domestic partner rights being equivalent to marriage equality.

Further, a city may have little incentive to create a domestic partner registry where the state recognizes same-sex relationships in a more comprehensive way. Therefore, a city will receive full credit on the basis of city, county, or state-level relationship recognition, if applicable.

However, cities may not earn double points in this section for having domestic partner registries and statewide recognition. There are **2 bonus points** available if a city had previously recognized same-sex relationships but was prohibited from continuing to do so by state law.



**58% of cities** have relationship recognition.

# III. Municipality as Employer

This section is the most heavily weighted because almost every municipality has immediate control over its employment policies. More information on all of these criteria are available on the web on [www.hrc.org/mei](http://www.hrc.org/mei). **Respect for LGBT employees is clearly demonstrated by the inclusiveness of these employment policies.**

## **CITY PROHIBITS DISCRIMINATION IN CITY EMPLOYMENT**

Cities can adopt internal hiring policies that prohibit employment discrimination (including hiring, promotions, termination, and compensation) on the basis of sexual orientation (5 points) and gender identity or expression (5 points). It is a fundamental principle of fairness that an employee should be judged not because of who he or she is, but based on his or her ability to perform the responsibilities of a position.

## **CITY OFFERS DOMESTIC PARTNER BENEFITS, LEGAL DEPENDENT BENEFITS, AND EQUIVALENT FAMILY LEAVE**

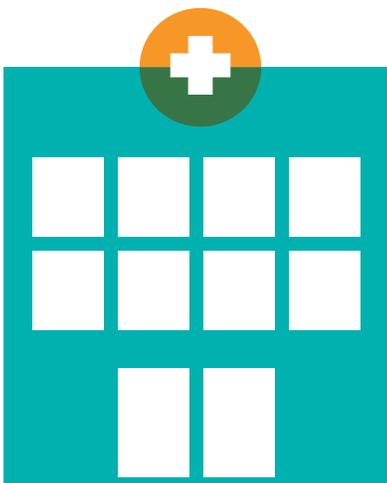
Employees are extended certain benefits that are sometimes tied to marital status; this means employees in same-sex relationships are often not afforded equivalent employee benefits. Cities may rectify this by offering medical benefits to a domestic partner or same-sex spouse (4 points), by recognizing that the legal dependent of an employee's same-sex partner or spouse is also a dependent of the employee and extending equivalent benefits (2 points); and ensuring that family leave policies recognize the true scope of an employee's family (2 points).

## **CITY REQUIRES ITS CONTRACTORS TO HAVE INCLUSIVE NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICIES**

Cities that take fair workplaces seriously also require city contractors to have inclusive non-discrimination policies. An equal opportunity ordinance, as these are sometimes known, requires city contractors to adopt non-discrimination policies that prohibit adverse employment actions on the basis of sexual orientation (2 points) and gender identity or expression (2 points).

## **CITY REQUIRES ITS CONTRACTORS TO OFFER EQUAL BENEFITS**

An equal benefits ordinance requires a municipality's contractors to offer equal health insurance and other benefits to their employees (4 points). This ensures that employees with same-sex spouses and employees with domestic partners receive the same compensation (salary and benefits) as do their heterosexual counterparts; it also ensures that the city does not unwittingly engage in or encourage discrimination by awarding bids to contractors who treat employees differently based on their sexual orientation. Cities may receive partial credit if they have no such ordinance but instead give preference to city contractors who offer equal benefits.



**5% of cities**  
rated offer trans-inclusive  
healthcare benefits.



## WORKPLACE POLICIES FOR CITY EMPLOYEES

- Non-Discrimination Policies Inclusive of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity
- No Non-Discrimination Policies on the Basis of Sexual Orientation or Gender Identity
- Non-Discrimination Policies on the Basis of Sexual Orientation Only

### BONUS POINTS: GROSSING UP OF EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

Under federal law, until recently, the contribution made by an employer to an employee's same-sex spouse or partner's benefits was considered taxable income to the employee, where such a contribution made by the employer to an employee's opposite-sex spouse's benefits was not taxable income. The discrepancy in tax treatment created a tax penalty for employees who received domestic partner benefits; grossing up policies address this penalty by offsetting it (3 bonus points). While this federal law has been overturned with regard to legally married same-sex couples, it is still in place for couples in a civil union or domestic partnership and some states continue to have similar state tax policies. Because the need for this type of program is no longer universal, and because grossing up is a policy that is fairly new to the public sector, these points are bonus points.

### BONUS POINTS: TRANSGENDER-INCLUSIVE HEALTHCARE BENEFITS

Cities, like other employers, provide health benefits to their employees, but some employees routinely have critical and medically necessary treatment excluded from the healthcare options they are offered.

Transgender employees are routinely denied healthcare coverage for gender-affirming care such as hormone replacement therapy, sex reassignment

surgery, and other medically necessary care. Cities should work with their insurance carriers or administrators to remove transgender exclusions from the group health insurance plans and ensure that at least one of the insurance options available to employees affirmatively states that it provides transgender-inclusive insurance coverage (4 bonus points).

Because many cities rated in the MEI participate in public health exchanges that do not provide transgender-inclusive policy options, these points are bonus points in 2013; however, as there has been so much progress made in opening these exchanges, these points will be converted into standard points on the 2014 MEI and beyond. The nature of these points this year does not imply that transgender exclusions in health insurance policies are anything but unacceptable and discriminatory.

### BONUS POINTS: MUNICIPALITY IS A WELCOMING PLACE TO WORK

This section measures whether the city is a welcoming workplace for LGBT employees as measured by the following: the city actively recruits LGBT employees, conducts LGBT-inclusive diversity training, or has an LGBT employee affinity group (a total of 2 bonus points are awarded if any of these exist).

# SUCCESS STORY: EQUALITY MARYLAND



Having these local laws helps us demonstrate, especially to state legislators representing these areas that these laws operate without any of the “doomsday” scenarios our opponents testify will happen if these laws get passed.

**Equality Maryland has been working to add gender identity and expression to the state anti-discrimination laws since the early 2000s.**

As with many statewide LGBT legislative efforts, these laws often take many years to pass. Therefore, **the strategy for passing a statewide law usually involves pursuing incremental steps and wins.**

**In the case for statewide transgender laws this may mean passing local laws.**

These small steps serve two purposes—first, they help people right now and second, the issue becomes more palatable to state legislators and the public. Additionally, it provides an opportunity for trans people and their allies to advocate, share their stories and witness elected officials support their efforts.

Local legislative campaigns keep our skills sharp, our community engaged, and build momentum and support for the statewide law.

**Part of our strategy in Maryland has involved passing local anti-discrimination laws for transgender people.** We started in Baltimore City in 2002, followed by Montgomery County in 2007, Howard County in 2011 and Baltimore County in 2012. These jurisdictions comprise about 47% of the state’s population. Having these four local laws helps us demonstrate, especially to state legislators representing these areas, that other elected (local) officials are supportive and that these laws operate without any of the “doomsday” scenarios our opponents testify will happen if these laws gets passed.

**CARRIE EVANS**  
Executive Director

## IV. Services and Programs

Census data shows that LGBT people live in virtually every city in the country, but not every city recognizes that their LGBT constituents can have different needs. **This section assesses the efforts of the city to include LGBT constituents in city services and programs.**

### HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSIONS

Human Rights Commissions (7 points) do important work to identify and eliminate discrimination; even in jurisdictions where LGBT equality isn't explicitly a part of the commission's charter, these commissions investigate complaints, educate the city, and sometimes enforce non-discrimination laws.

Human Rights Commissions serve as important bridges between constituents and their city. Similarly, an LGBT liaison to the Mayor's office (5 points) is responsible for looking at city policies and services through an LGBT lens and speaking up when a policy or service might exclude LGBT people. This position is also known to be a friendly ear to constituents who want to bring LGBT-related issues to the city government but are fearful they might be dismissed or misunderstood.

### BONUS POINTS: SERVICES FOR VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

The MEI also evaluates city services that address segments of the LGBT population who are particularly vulnerable and may have specific and acute needs. While all people age, battle illness, struggle to fit in, and work hard to improve their lot in life, these struggles can be different and particularly difficult for LGBT people. Cities can address these challenges by offering services—or supporting a third party provider of these services—to LGBT youth, LGBT elderly, LGBT homeless people, or people who are HIV positive or living with AIDS (2 bonus points total if the city offers any one or more of these types of services).

### ANTI-BULLYING POLICIES IN SCHOOLS

Finally, anti-bullying policies in schools are also included in the MEI. A state, county, or city may prohibit bullying on the basis of sexual orientation (3 points) and gender identity or expression (3 points). Credit will also be given if all school districts within city limits have such policies.

  
**180**  
Have Bullying Protections on the Basis of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

**34**  
Have Policies on the Basis of Sexual Orientation Only

**+77**  
Have No Bullying Protections on the Basis of Sexual Orientation or Gender Identity

**291**  
total cities

While all people age, battle illness, struggle to fit in, and work hard to improve their lot in life, these struggles can be different and particularly difficult for LGBT people.

## V. Law Enforcement

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**The relationship between law enforcement and the LGBT community is often fraught with suspicion, misunderstanding, and fear.** LGBT people are vulnerable to violence arising from bigotry and ignorance, and this danger is only exacerbated when police are perceived to be part of the problem. A police force can ensure safety for all by treating LGBT people with understanding and respect, remaining mindful of the LGBT community's unique law enforcement concerns and engaging the community in a positive way.

### **LGBT POLICE LIAISON**

An LGBT police liaison (8 points) can serve as an important bridge between the community and law enforcement. The liaison is an advocate for fair and respectful enforcement of the law as well as an officer that the community can rely upon to appropriately respond to sensitive issues.

### **REPORTING OF HATE CRIMES STATISTICS**

Respectful and fair enforcement includes responsible reporting of hate crimes, including for hate crimes based on sexual orientation and gender identity, to the FBI (10 points).

Such reporting demonstrates law enforcement's attention to these crimes and ensures that the larger law enforcement community is able to accurately gauge the scope and responses to them.



LGBT people are vulnerable to violence arising from bigotry and ignorance, and this danger is only exacerbated when police are perceived to be part of the problem.

## VI. Relationship with the LGBT Community

**Leadership is an aspect of policy that is not fully captured by executive orders or the passage of legislation into law.**

When a mayor marches in a Pride parade, a city council dedicates a park to an LGBT civil rights leader, or a city paints its crosswalks in rainbow colors, it sends a message to LGBT people that they are a valued part of the community.

At first glance, these actions may seem to be more symbol than substance; however, as HRC Foundation reported in its groundbreaking youth report in 2012, four in ten LGBT youth surveyed said the community in which they live is not accepting of LGBT people, and 60% of the youth surveyed said they heard negative messages about being LGBT from elected leaders.

**LGBT youth are twice as likely as their peers to say they will need to move from their hometown in order to feel accepted.** When elected leaders speak out on matters of equality, their constituents do hear—and it informs their constituents' perception of safety, inclusion, and belonging.

This category, therefore, measures the commitment of the city to include the LGBT community and to advocate for full equality.

### **LEADERSHIP'S PUBLIC POSITION ON EQUALITY**

City leadership is rated (on a scale of 0 - 5 points) on its public statements on matters of equality, particularly where the city leadership pushes for equality in the face of substantial adversity. For example, a city would be awarded points if the city council passed a resolution in support of marriage equality—while this is not something the city can legislate, it is a powerful statement of the city's principles nonetheless.

### **LEADERSHIP'S PRO-EQUALITY EFFORTS**

The persistence of the city leadership in pursuing legislation or policies that further equality is rated (on a scale of 0 - 3 points). Note that even small or unsuccessful efforts are recognized in this category, and that these efforts may be heavily weighted if the city's political environment is not conducive to passing pro-equality legislation.

### **THREE OPPORTUNITIES TO EARN BONUS POINTS:**

- First: for openly LGBT people holding elected or appointed office in the municipality (3 bonus points).
- Second: for direct engagement with LGBT constituents through participation in Pride or partnership with LGBT advocacy groups (2 bonus points).
- Third: for cities who do all they can in the face of state law that restricts their ability to pass LGBT-inclusive laws or policies (2 bonus points).



When elected leaders speak out on matters of equality, their constituents do hear—and it informs their constituents' perception of safety, inclusion, and belonging.

# ACKNOWLEDGING CONTEXT

## Not All Cities Are Created Equal

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**Some cities have the autonomy and wherewithal to pass inclusive laws and offer cutting-edge city services; other cities are hampered by severe state-imposed limitations**

on their ability to pass inclusive laws, or they have found that the small scope of their local government limits their capabilities.

The MEI is designed to understand the unique situation of each city and is structured to reward the specific achievements of a local government. The efforts and achievements of each city can only be fairly judged within that city's context; while imposing a score may seem to strip a city of its context, the MEI honors the different situations from which the selected cities come in three major ways:

### **BONUS POINTS**

First, in addition to the 100 standard points for city laws and services, the MEI includes 20 bonus points. Bonus points are awarded for essential programs, protections, or benefits that are not attainable or are very difficult to attain for some cities; therefore, cities with the item are rewarded, but cities without it are not penalized. Bonus points can also provide some leeway for cities that face challenges in accomplishing the specific achievements the MEI measures, and they ensure that every city has the ability to improve its score for next year.

### **CONSIDERATION OF STATE LAW**

Second, the MEI weights state and municipal law such that the effect of excellent or restrictive state law does not determine the city's ability to score well.

### **LEGISLATIVE LEADERSHIP**

Third, it also rates the city leadership's public position on LGBT equality and gives credit for legislative efforts (even unsuccessful efforts), so if a city has outspoken advocates for equality who are unfortunately still in the minority, the city will still receive credit for the efforts it has made.



The efforts and achievements of each city can only be fairly judged within that city's context.

# Fair Assessment Respects Legal Differences

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The *Municipal Equality Index* is carefully designed to rate cities in detail while respecting that a number of factors may boost or inhibit a city's ability or incentives to adopt the laws and policies this project rates.

Given the range of authority and incentives that cities have, and acknowledging that our effort to rate small cities as well as large cities exacerbates these challenges, **the MEI had to wrestle with three major questions in its initial design.**

## QUESTION 1

How could the MEI fairly take state law into account, particularly as the disparity between states with pro-equality laws and states without pro-equality laws continues to grow?

## ANSWER

The answer is balance. The rating system would not be fair if cities were not able to score a 100 on the MEI without being in a state that had favorable state law. Allocating the points carefully to respect the dynamic relationship between state and local government was a must, and we concentrated on what the state law meant for the city being rated.

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## QUESTION 2

How could the MEI assess a list of cities as diverse as those selected while acknowledging that the smaller places rated may understandably have less capacity to engage on LGBT issues?

## ANSWER

We addressed concerns about a small city's capacity to affect change by building flexibility into the scorecard through the use of bonus points and by providing multiple avenues toward earning points.

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## QUESTION 3

What do MEI scores say about the atmosphere for LGBT people living and working in a particular place?

## ANSWER

Even the most thoughtful survey of laws and policies cannot objectively assess the efficacy of enforcement and it certainly cannot encapsulate the lived experience of discrimination that many LGBT people—even those living in 100-point cities—face every day.

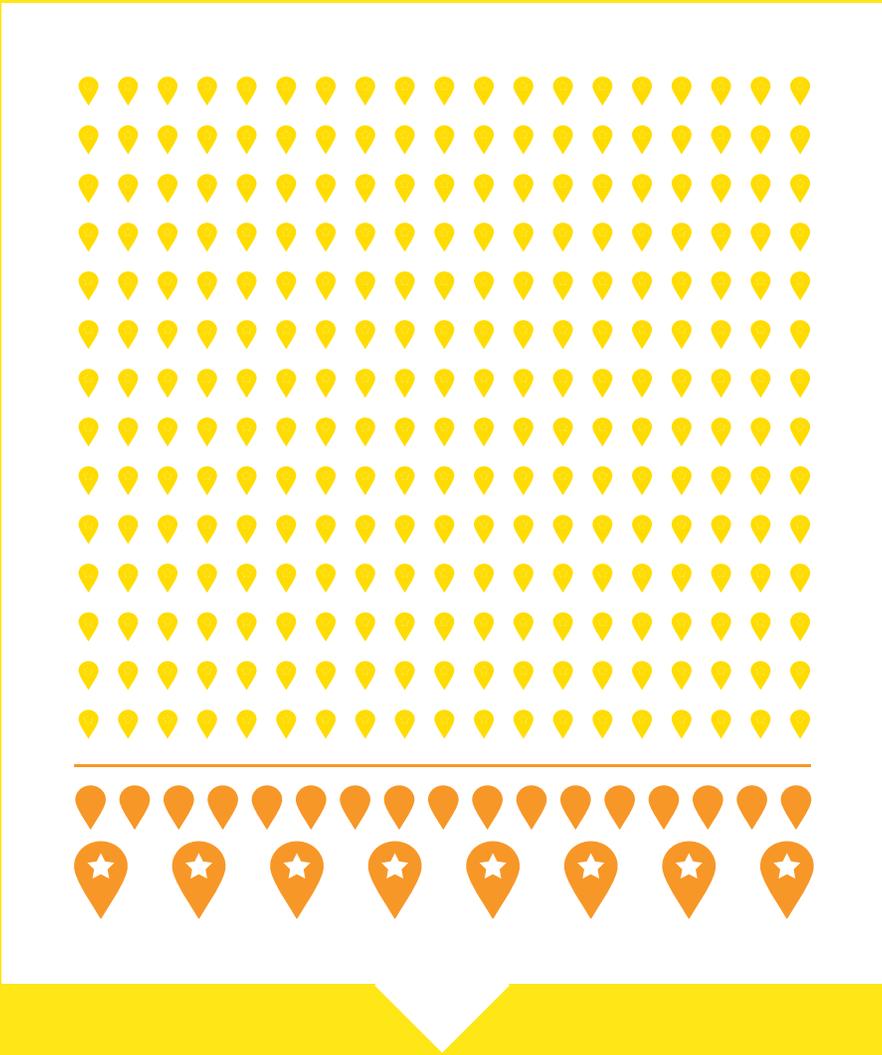
Therefore, it is important to emphasize that the MEI is an evaluation of municipal laws and policies. It is not a rating of the best places for LGBT people to live, nor is it an evaluation of the adequacy or effectiveness of enforcement. It is not an encapsulation of what it feels like to be an LGBT person walking down the street. While some LGBT people may prefer to live in cities that respect and include them, there are undoubtedly many other factors that make a place a welcoming, inclusive place to live.

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To be clear, the MEI specifically rates cities on their laws and policies while respecting the legal and political context the city operates within. It is not a measure of an LGBT person's lived experience in that city.

The MEI specifically rates cities on their laws and policies while respecting the legal and political context the city operates within.

# CITIES LEAD WHERE STATES HAVE NOT



25 PERFECT SCORES  
**8 PERFECT**  
SCORES IN STATES  
WITH NO SUPPORTIVE LAWS

**291**  
CITIES SURVEYED

# SUCCESS STORY: ATLANTA, GEORGIA



I am proud to be mayor of the first deep Southern city to achieve a perfect score on the *Municipal Equality Index*.

**I am proud to be mayor of the first deep Southern city to achieve a perfect score on the *Municipal Equality Index*.**

Atlanta's diversity is part of what makes our city great. Residents, businesses, film producers, artists, college students- a large part of what brings them to Atlanta is the quality of people who live and work here. This city has a rich history of upholding human rights and providing equal opportunity to all people. **Atlanta's commitment to equality includes outlawing discrimination based upon a person's sexual orientation and gender identity.**

**LGBT equality has been an important issue for me throughout my career.** As a member of Georgia's House of Representatives, I was the chief sponsor of Georgia's first and only Hate Crimes Bill that protected LGBT individuals. As a State Senator, I led the effort to oppose a constitutional amendment banning

gay marriage. I consistently helped defeat state bills that would ban gay adoption. On the national level, I was a vocal advocate for the repeal of "Don't Ask Don't Tell" and for allowing LGBT individuals to serve openly in the military.

**My commitment to LGBT rights continues as Atlanta's Mayor.**

In 2012, I expressed my support of marriage equality for same-sex couples; marriage is a fundamental right for all loving couples regardless of their sexual orientation. I recently appointed Robin Shaha as my Mayoral Advisor on LGBT issues. She will identify and provide counsel on areas of community concern, and will recommend strategies for advancing LGBT equality citywide. In July, I proudly signed a bill updating the Atlanta Code to ensure that all non-discrimination provisions include gender identity as a protected class. This September, I signed on as a co-chair of the national Mayors for the Freedom to Marry campaign.

**Atlanta's history of civil rights leadership is rooted in the belief that our diversity makes our city stronger.** As a result, Atlanta is home to one of the largest and most vibrant LGBT communities in the country. As Mayor, I will continue my efforts to achieve equal protection and equal treatment of Atlanta's LGBT residents, workers and visitors.

**KASIM REED**  
Mayor

# Accounting for City Size

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The MEI rates municipalities as small as Rehoboth Beach (population 1,373) and as large as New York City (8,336,700). Such a range in city size creates concerns about ensuring that the efforts of small cities are not diminished in comparison to the capabilities of large cities.

**Fairness dictates that the MEI not measure small cities against a standard only the metropolitan giants of the country can meet.**

The MEI is designed to ensure that small cities have the same ability to score well on the MEI as larger cities do.

First, while some of the criteria might be more challenging for a small city to accomplish, none of the non-bonus criteria are prohibitive for small cities. Further, flexibility was built into the scoring system to acknowledge that **a small city may accomplish the criteria in a slightly different manner:** for example, an LGBT liaison may have many other duties, and a Human Rights Commission might be all-volunteer.

Second, the MEI uses bonus points to ensure cities are not being held accountable for services that they simply are unable to provide. Points pertaining to a city's infrastructure are generally bonus points and there often are multiple paths to earning the same set of points. A city can earn "Welcoming Workplace" bonus points

for LGBT-specific recruitment for city employment opportunities, but if the city is too small to actively recruit it can earn those same points either through an inclusive workplace diversity training or facilitating a Pride group for city employees. Having alternative paths to the same points and classifying some points as bonus accommodates the varying needs and capabilities of different sized cities.

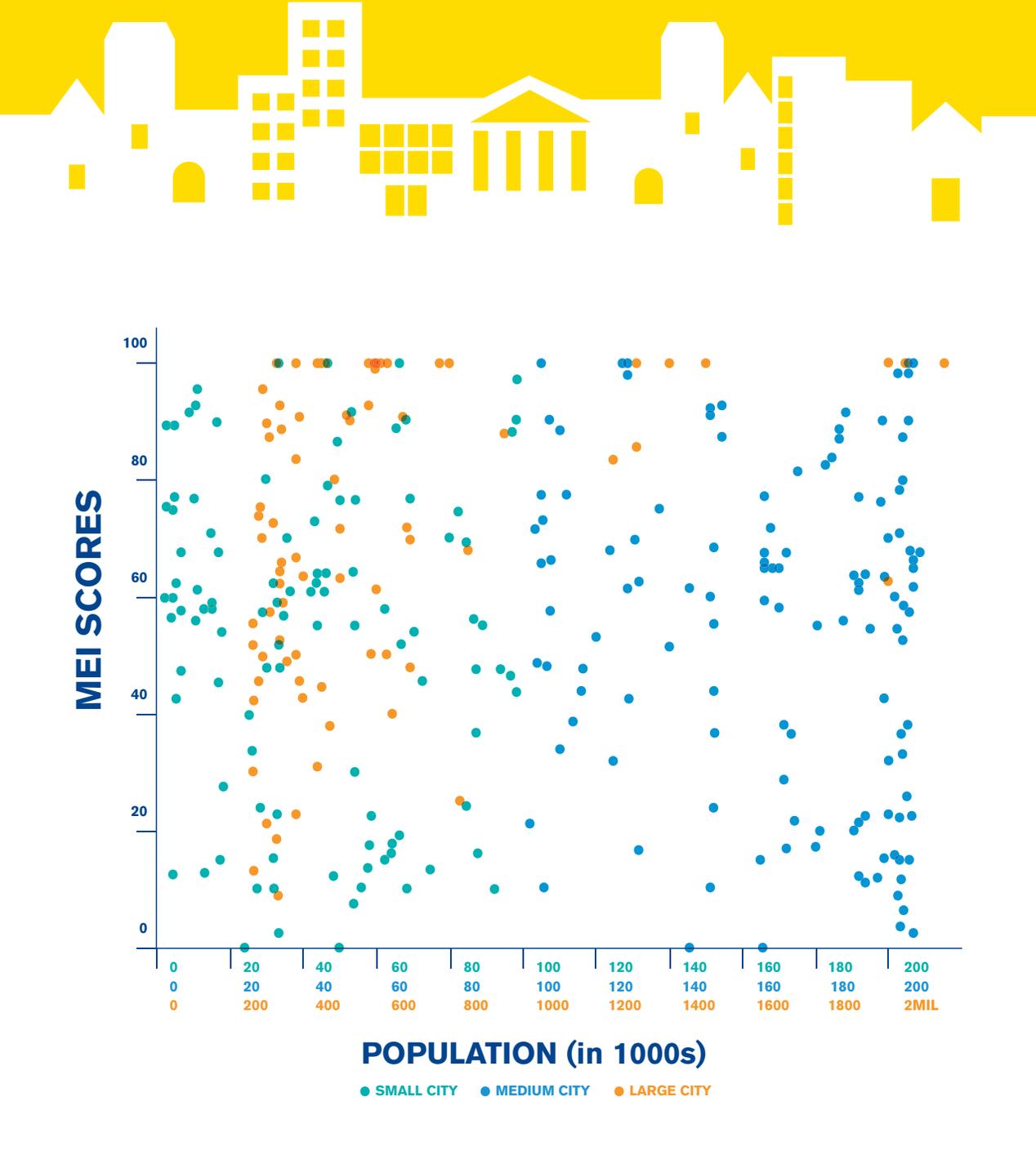
**An analysis of the MEI's results shows these efforts to accommodate small cities worked: small cities were able to score comparably with the large cities.**

Last year the data clearly showed that a city's score was not well predicted by its size, and this year's results show the same. In 2013, small cities (population under 100,000 people) boasted three perfect scores and four cities in the ninetieth percentile, with 42 percent of small cities scoring in the top half. Small cities averaged 53 points, narrowly beating the average of 52 points for medium sized cities (populations between 100,000 and 250,000), although both averaged less than large cities (more than 250,000 people) at 71 points. Small cities make up just over a third of all cities rated.



In 2013, small cities boasted 3 perfect scores and 4 cities in the 90th percentile.

# CITY SIZE NOT PREDICTIVE OF MEI SCORE



# Balancing State and Local Laws

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## **Cities are creations of the state.**

Cities are granted the power to govern by their states, and some states have multiple classes of cities that are invested with varying degrees of autonomy.

Some cities are granted so much power that they have nearly complete independence, but other cities—particularly smaller cities—are more limited in the scope of their city government.

To be a worthwhile survey of cities across states the MEI must be respectful of how different cities are from one another. This is especially true when LGBT law is the subject being surveyed. Some cities operate under state law (known as the Dillon's Rule) that severely limits the ability of municipalities to offer more generous protections than the state has chosen to offer.

While this law isn't explicitly anti-LGBT, some states have used it to block municipalities from extending non-discrimination and other protections to LGBT constituents and employees. Other states have passed laws that expressly prevent cities from adopting LGBT-inclusive laws or policies.

On the other hand, many states have passed pro-equality legislation—including marriage equality, non-discrimination laws, and anti-bullying laws—which may render similar protections at the local level duplicative.

The MEI balances the influence of LGBT-inclusive state law by weighting state and local laws equally, and by not awarding double points to a city fortunate enough to have protections at both the state and local levels.

If a state has a comprehensive and inclusive non-discrimination law, a city may not be incentivized to pass an ordinance extending duplicative protections, but it should still have those protections reflected in its score.

Conversely, the city should be able to achieve a perfect score on the basis of municipal law alone—otherwise the MEI would not be a true evaluation of cities. The success of this balanced approach is demonstrated by a number of cities that were able to achieve perfect scores despite being in states that do not have pro-equality laws.



The city should be able to achieve a perfect score on the basis of municipal law alone.

# MEI ALL-STARS

High Scores in States without Supportive State Law



# Understanding Restrictive State Law

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Some states restrict their cities from passing inclusive laws either by passing specific legislation that prohibits cities from doing so or through application of the Dillon's Rule (which prevents cities from providing broader non-discrimination protections than those offered under state law) to LGBT-inclusive legislation.

An example of restrictive legislation is a Tennessee law that prohibits municipalities from passing non-discrimination ordinances that affect private employees. Application of the Dillon's Rule also prevents cities in Virginia from providing domestic partner benefits to LGBT city employees because the state does not grant those benefits to its employees.

Because of these types of restrictions, not every city has the power to enact the types of legislation that the MEI measures. Cities with a dedication to equality that are in Virginia, Tennessee, and North Carolina, for example, will never be able to score as well as cities with comparable dedication to equality that exist in states without the restrictive laws.

**The MEI provides avenues for cities that are dedicated to equality—as some cities in Virginia, North Carolina, and Tennessee are—to have that dedication reflected in their score despite restrictive state law.**

Bonus points are offered for testing the limits of these state restrictions, while standard points reflect city leadership advocating against the state restrictions. These bonus points help to level the playing field for restricted cities; however, a city with these state restrictions will find it extremely challenging—and, in some cases, perhaps impossible—to score a 100 on the MEI.

While this may initially appear to be at odds with the MEI's purpose of evaluating what cities do, **the bottom line is that these vital protections don't exist for the folks who live and work in these cities.** That these cities will face an uphill battle in earning points for certain criteria on the MEI is a reflection of the actual difficulties they face as a result of restrictive state law. Ameliorating the effect of a restrictive state law on the MEI score would be a dishonest representation of the protections that the city truly does offer.

A final note on this subject: where a city has passed laws protecting LGBT people and continues to enforce those laws, even when those laws are arguably unenforceable but have not definitively been invalidated by case law or statute, the MEI gives the city credit for the law.

Not every city has the power to enact the types of legislation that the MEI measures.

# Effect of Enforcement and Lived Experience

The MEI is an encapsulation of the best practices of inclusion followed by cities nationwide. It is a blueprint for positive change and an opportunity for cities to become aware of best practices in municipal equality. It is not a ranking of the friendliest cities in which to live. **It neither attempts to quantify how respectfully cities enforce their laws, nor does it try to gauge the experience of an LGBT person interacting with the police or city hall.**

Fair and respectful implementation of the best practices described by the MEI is crucial if the policies are to have any meaning. Realistically, the MEI simply has no objective way of measuring the equality of enforcement. Even the most thoughtful survey of laws and policies cannot objectively assess the efficacy of enforcement and it certainly cannot encapsulate the lived experience of discrimination that many LGBT people—even those living in 100-point cities—face every day.

The MEI can make some limited, blunt judgments about the existence of enforcement, if not its quality. For example, one of the harder questions the MEI faces is evaluating how seriously police departments take anti-LGBT related violence.

While the MEI awards points to cities that report hate crimes statistics to the FBI, it does not evaluate whether the report made by the police department to the FBI is an accurate reflection of hate crimes, whether detectives competently collected evidence related to proving a hate-related motivation for the violence or whether the police department created a safe space for victims to come forward.

Collecting and assessing such data in an objective, thorough way would be impossible. However, a city will not receive credit for reporting hate crimes if the city hasn't reported any hate crimes of any kind this year or for five previous years. The MEI deems this effectively non-reporting because the probability is very low that a city

truly experienced zero hate crimes of any kind in five years. While this is a judgment call, it is the best measure the MEI has to determine if hate crimes are being taken seriously at the local level.

**A 100-point city, then, may have terrific policies—a well-trained police force, a police liaison, and consistent hate crimes reporting—but nevertheless have an atmosphere in which LGBT people have intense fear of tangling with the police department.**

This fear may be magnified for LGBT people of color or undocumented LGBT immigrants, and the MEI reflects discrimination against those populations in only a general way. On the other hand, **a police department in a 40-point city could have none of these policies but have a reputation for fair and respectful enforcement.**

The MEI specifically rates cities on their laws and policies; it is not a measure of an LGBT person's lived experience in that city.



The MEI is not a measure of an LGBT person's lived experience in that city.





# SUMMARY OF RESULTS

## Success from Coast to Coast

The results of this year's MEI prove that **cities of all sizes in states across the country take matters of equality seriously**. Of the 25 cities that scored 100 points, only six (24%) have populations of over a million people. Seven have populations of between a half million and a million people, and nine have populations of between one hundred thousand and five hundred thousand people.

### **THREE 100-POINT CITIES HAVE POPULATIONS OF LESS THAN ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND PEOPLE.**

One city—Missoula, Montana—that does so without the help of statewide relationship recognition or non-discrimination laws. This highlights the momentum for municipal equality that has been sweeping through small cities across the country.

### **THIS MOMENTUM TOUCHES EVERY CORNER OF THE COUNTRY.**

Cities in the West had the highest average score and consistently scored above 70 points; cities in the Great Lakes and New England regions followed closely behind; and cities in Mountain and Mid-Atlantic states came in above average. While cities in the Southeast, Southwest, and Plains states tended to come in below average, there were several notable scores in those regions: Saint Louis and Kansas City, Missouri both received perfect scores, as did Austin, Phoenix, and Atlanta. New Orleans and Fort Worth each scored 91 points, with Tucson scoring 90, Tampa 89, San Antonio 86, Dallas 85 and Tallahassee 84.

These cities and many more demonstrated that **cities across the country have a commitment to LGBT equality that is unbridled by regionalism** and not confined to the parts of the country many people assume are most LGBT-friendly.

**Overall, cities rated in the 2013 MEI averaged 57 points**, which is down slightly from last year's average score of 59 points. As cities rated in 2012 tended to improve their scores in 2013, this is explained by the addition of new cities in the MEI 2013. Generally, cities being rated for the first time in 2013 tended to perform worse than the cities rated in 2012; this is likely because the criteria used to select cities last year captured cities that were more likely to have already taken steps to make their laws and policies LGBT inclusive.

The average score for the three largest cities in each state was 55 points; the average score for the 51-150 largest cities in the country was 53 points; and the average score for the cities home to the state's largest public university was 61 points. These scores brought down the overall average of all participating cities. This comes despite the overall rise in scores being rated for the second year. Both of these trends are likely to persist in future editions of the MEI, and the improvement of cities from year to year should not be obscured by a decrease in the overall average score.

### **CITIES THAT DID PARTICULARLY WELL IN 2013 WERE CITIES CHOSEN FOR THEIR HIGH PROPORTION OF SAME-SEX COUPLES**

**These cities scored 80 points on average.** For those cities that fell within multiple city selection criteria, the positive influence of same-sex couples was magnified: a city with a high proportion of same-sex couples averaged 88 points if it was also a state capital; 87 points if it was also one of the 150 largest cities; 95 points if it was also one of the three largest cities in the state; and 93 points if it was also a university city.

None of the other combinations had this type of effect. Further, where three or more city selection criteria applied this effect was even more pronounced: where one of those three criteria was that the city is home to a high proportion of same-sex couples, the average score rose by over 25 points.

These findings underscore an important point: **When matters of equality come up, cities of all sizes in all parts of the country respond by adopting more inclusive laws and policies.**

# EQUALITY ACROSS AMERICA

Cities across the country have a commitment to LGBT equality that is unbridled by regionalism and not confined to the parts of the country many people assume are most LGBT friendly.



# SUCCESS STORY: FAIRNESS CAMPAIGN



Kentucky is a state of Fairness, and treating everyone with dignity and respect is just as much a rural value as an urban one.

From the hills of Appalachia to our commonwealth's capital and beyond, Kentuckians are mobilizing around LGBTQ Fairness like never before! And **who could have known it would be our rural coal country leading the way?** Yet when the Appalachian town of Vicco, population 334, passed their Fairness ordinance this January—making it the smallest city in America to ban LGBTQ discrimination—it affirmed everything our Fairness Coalition has been hearing as we've worked across the commonwealth: Kentucky is a state of Fairness, and treating everyone with dignity and respect is just as much a rural value as an urban one.

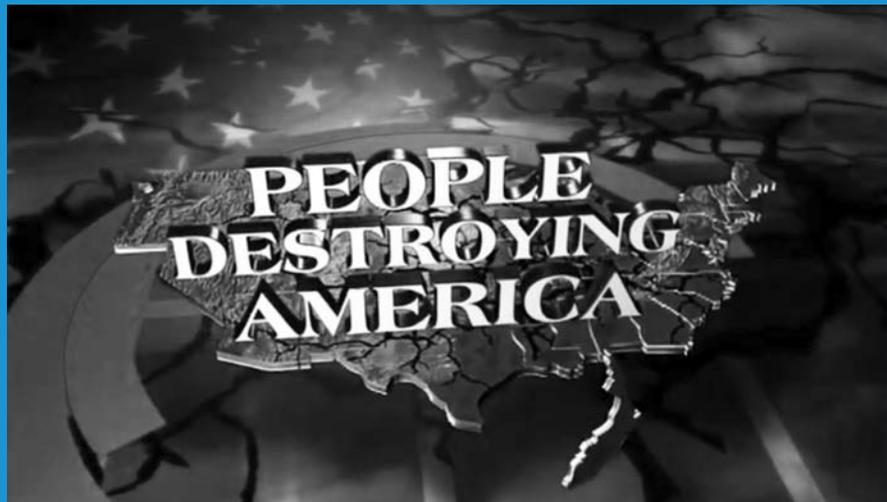
**83% of all registered Kentucky voters—Republicans, Democrats, and Independents alike—support simple anti-discrimination protections** in employment, housing, and public accommodations based on sexual orientation and gender identity, according to a recent poll. But just under 11% of our state legislators have signed on to support a statewide ban on discrimination, which is why we have endeavored

to build a groundswell of regional support through municipal Fairness campaigns.

Since Vicco's historic step—and its famed segment on The Colbert Report—thousands of local residents have become deeply involved in grassroots Fairness movements that span our entire commonwealth and work from a place of intersectional liberation, holding immigrants' rights, anti-racism, trans rights, women's rights, and others as central to our

work for LGBTQ equality. When our state's capital, Frankfort, became the fifth city in our commonwealth to outlaw LGBTQ discrimination this August, it became clear there's no turning back. Now two other Eastern Kentucky cities—Morehead and Berea—are making moves to become the next municipalities with Fairness, and it just keeps spreading!

**CHRIS HARTMAN**  
Director



Vicco's Fairness Ordinance was featured on a segment of the Colbert Report entitled "People Who Are Destroying America—Johnny Cummings."

The Colbert Report photo still courtesy of Comedy Central ©2013 Comedy Partners. All rights reserved.

# SCORES

STATE	CITY	I. Non-Discrimination	II. Relationship Recognition	III. Municipality as Employer	IV. Services and Programs	V. Law Enforcement	VI. Relationship with LGBT Community	REGULAR POINTS	BONUS POINTS	FINAL SCORE
ALABAMA	Birmingham	○	○	○	◐	○	◐	9	0	9
	Huntsville	○	○	○	◐	◐	○	17	0	17
	Mobile	○	○	○	◐	◐	◐	19	2	21
	Montgomery	○	○	◐	○	◐	○	15	0	15
	Tuscaloosa	○	○	○	○	◐	○	10	0	10
ALASKA	Anchorage	○	○	◐	◐	○	◐	21	0	21
	Fairbanks	○	○	◐	○	○	○	2	0	2
	Juneau	○	○	◐	◐	○	◐	20	3	23
ARIZONA	Chandler	○	○	○	◐	◐	○	20	2	22
	Gilbert	◐	○	○	◐	●	○	31	2	33
	Glendale	○	○	○	◐	◐	○	13	0	13
	Mesa	○	○	○	◐	●	◐	37	4	41
	Phoenix	●	●	◐	●	●	●	96	9	100
	Scottsdale	○	○	◐	◐	○	○	23	0	23
	Tempe	◐	○	◐	◐	●	◐	66	6	72
	Tucson	●	●	◐	◐	◐	◐	83	7	90
ARKANSAS	Fayetteville	○	○	◐	◐	◐	◐	44	2	46
	Fort Smith	○	○	○	◐	◐	○	16	0	16
	Little Rock	○	○	◐	○	◐	◐	16	5	21
	North Little Rock	○	○	○	◐	◐	○	17	0	17
CALIFORNIA	Anaheim	●	●	◐	◐	◐	○	59	4	63
	Bakersfield	●	●	◐	◐	◐	○	59	0	59
	Berkeley	●	●	◐	◐	◐	●	82	13	95
	Brisbane	●	●	◐	◐	◐	○	59	2	61
	Cathedral City	●	●	◐	◐	◐	◐	81	11	92
	Chula Vista	●	●	◐	◐	◐	◐	64	2	66
	Concord	●	●	◐	◐	◐	○	61	7	68
	Fontana	●	●	◐	◐	◐	○	62	0	62
	Fremont	●	●	◐	◐	◐	○	77	9	86
	Fresno	●	●	◐	◐	◐	◐	68	2	70
	Garden Grove	●	●	◐	◐	◐	○	59	4	63
	Glendale	●	●	◐	◐	◐	○	64	2	66

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# SCORES

STATE	CITY	I. Non-Discrimination	II. Relationship Recognition	III. Municipality as Employer	IV. Services and Programs	V. Law Enforcement	VI. Relationship with LGBT Community	REGULAR POINTS	BONUS POINTS	FINAL SCORE
CALIFORNIA	Guerneville (Sonoma County)	●	●	◐	◐	●	◐	80	9	89
	Huntington Beach	●	●	◐	◐	◐	◐	73	3	76
	Irvine	●	●	◐	◐	◐	○	54	0	54
	Lancaster	●	●	◐	◐	●	○	83	4	87
	Long Beach	●	●	●	●	●	●	100	9	100
	Los Angeles	●	●	◐	●	●	●	98	7	100
	Modesto	●	●	◐	◐	◐	○	58	0	58
	Moreno Valley	●	●	◐	◐	◐	○	64	0	64
	Oakland	●	●	◐	◐	●	◐	83	9	92
	Oceanside	●	●	◐	◐	◐	◐	59	0	59
	Ontario	●	●	◐	◐	◐	○	59	6	65
	Oxnard	●	●	◐	◐	◐	○	61	0	61
	Palm Springs	●	●	◐	◐	●	●	87	13	100
	Pasadena	●	●	◐	◐	◐	◐	69	5	74
	Rancho Cucamonga	●	●	◐	◐	◐	○	59	0	59
	Rancho Mirage	●	●	◐	◐	●	◐	81	9	90
	Richmond	●	●	◐	◐	◐	◐	73	4	77
	Riverside	●	●	◐	●	●	○	84	4	88
	Sacramento	●	●	◐	◐	●	●	84	7	91
	San Bernadino	●	●	◐	◐	◐	○	60	0	60
	San Diego	●	●	◐	◐	●	●	93	9	100
	San Francisco	●	●	●	●	●	●	100	10	100
	San Jose	●	●	◐	◐	◐	◐	80	7	87
	Santa Ana	●	●	◐	◐	◐	○	52	0	52
	Santa Clarita	●	●	◐	◐	◐	○	66	2	68
	Santa Rosa	●	●	◐	◐	◐	◐	56	11	67
	Signal Hill	●	●	◐	◐	●	◐	84	9	93
Stockton	●	●	◐	◐	●	◐	70	4	74	
Vallejo	●	●	◐	◐	◐	○	64	2	66	
West Hollywood	●	●	●	●	◐	●	96	9	100	
COLORADO	Aurora	●	●	◐	◐	◐	○	66	0	66
	Boulder	●	●	◐	◐	◐	◐	81	6	87
	Colorado Springs	●	●	◐	◐	◐	○	58	2	60
	Denver	●	●	◐	●	●	●	90	9	99

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# SCORES

STATE	CITY							REGULAR POINTS	BONUS POINTS	FINAL SCORE
		I. Non-Discrimination	II. Relationship Recognition	III. Municipality as Employer	IV. Services and Programs	V. Law Enforcement	VI. Relationship with LGBT Community			
CONNECTICUT	Bridgeport	●	●	◐	◑	◑	◑	61	0	61
	Hartford	●	●	●	●	◑	●	92	7	99
	New Haven	●	●	●	●	●	●	100	5	100
	Storrs (Mansfield)	●	●	◐	◑	◑	○	58	0	58
DELAWARE	Dover	●	●	◐	◑	◑	○	55	2	57
	Newark	●	●	◐	○	◑	○	50	2	52
	Rehoboth Beach	●	●	◐	◐	◑	◑	57	5	62
	Wilmington	●	●	◐	◐	◑	◐	54	0	54
FLORIDA	Cape Coral	○	○	○	○	◑	○	10	0	10
	Fort Lauderdale	●	●	◐	◑	●	◑	70	7	77
	Hialeah	◐	●	◑	◑	◑	○	58	0	58
	Hollywood	●	●	◐	◑	◑	○	54	0	54
	Jacksonville	○	○	○	◑	◑	◑	23	2	25
	Miami	◐	●	◐	◑	◑	◑	60	7	67
	Miami Shores	◐	●	◐	◑	◑	◑	53	3	56
	Oakland Park	●	●	●	◐	◑	●	80	5	85
	Orlando	●	●	◐	◑	◑	●	74	5	79
	Pembroke Pines	●	●	○	◐	○	◑	43	0	43
	Port Saint Lucie	○	○	○	○	○	○	0	0	0
	St. Petersburg	◐	●	◐	◑	◑	●	61	5	66
	Tallahassee	●	●	◑	◑	◑	◑	75	9	84
	Tampa	●	●	◐	◑	●	●	80	9	89
Wilton Manors	●	●	◑	◑	◑	◑	75	7	82	
GEORGIA	Athens	○	●	◐	◑	◑	◑	44	0	44
	Atlanta	●	●	◑	●	●	●	96	5	100
	Augusta-Richmond	○	○	○	◑	○	◑	10	2	12
	Avondale Estates	○	●	◐	◑	◑	●	49	7	56
	Columbus	○	○	◐	○	◑	○	20	0	20
	Decatur	○	○	◑	◑	○	◑	22	5	27
	North Druid Hills (DeKalb County)	○	○	◐	◑	○	○	15	0	15

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# SUCCESS STORY: SOUTH CAROLINA EQUALITY



The MEI has helped us build avenues of communication that remain open after the scoring process and allow us to work together to better address other LGBT related issues as they arise in the community.

**The MEI has given us a tool in our conversations about municipal equality with South Carolina cities.** It has provided an opportunity to sit down with City of Columbia and Charleston County leaders to discuss each scoring criteria, identify the steps that would need to be taken to secure a higher score in that area, and then determine which options were shorter term actions and which options were more longer term goals. Then we worked together to make them happen.

**Because the MEI gives a deadline for which to complete our efforts,** it gives our partners an incentive to complete the projects in time to ensure the highest score for their cities. **It is great to see hard work rewarded with higher scores.**

As these elected officials look to run for reelection, **some of the work that we have achieved together through the MEI has been a point of personal pride,** which they have shared publicly to let LGBT voters know that they are working for them to make their cities and counties better places for equality.

The MEI has helped us build avenues of communication that remain open after the scoring process and allow us to work together to better address other LGBT-related issues as they arise in the community. We hope more cities in South Carolina decide to take on the criteria of the MEI, even if they are not currently being scored.

**RYAN WILSON**  
Executive Director

# SCORES

STATE	CITY							REGULAR POINTS	BONUS POINTS	FINAL SCORE
		I. Non-Discrimination	II. Relationship Recognition	III. Municipality as Employer	IV. Services and Programs	V. Law Enforcement	VI. Relationship with LGBT Community			
HAWAII	Hilo (Hawaii County)	●	●	◐	◑	○	◑	61	0	61
	Honolulu	●	●	◐	◑	○	◑	68	4	72
	Manoa (Honolulu)	●	●	◑	◑	○	◑	60	4	64
	Pearl City (Honolulu)	●	●	◑	◑	○	◑	60	4	64
IDAHO	Boise	●	○	◑	○	●	●	54	2	56
	Meridian	○	○	◑	○	○	◑	13	0	13
	Nampa	○	○	◑	○	◑	○	24	0	24
ILLINOIS	Aurora	●	●	◑	◑	◑	○	66	0	66
	Champaign	●	●	◑	◑	◑	◑	74	0	74
	Chicago	●	●	◑	●	●	●	94	9	100
	Rockford	●	●	◑	◑	◑	◑	69	0	69
	Springfield	●	●	◑	◑	◑	◑	71	7	78
INDIANA	Bloomington	●	●	◑	◑	◑	◑	68	2	70
	Evansville	◑	○	◑	◑	○	◑	39	0	39
	Fort Wayne	◑	○	◑	◑	◑	○	30	0	30
	Indianapolis	●	○	◑	○	●	◑	61	5	66
IOWA	Cedar Rapids	●	●	◑	◑	◑	○	63	0	63
	Davenport	●	●	◑	●	◑	◑	85	5	90
	Des Moines	●	●	◑	◑	●	◑	81	7	88
	Iowa City	●	●	●	●	◑	○	84	6	90
KANSAS	Kansas City	○	○	○	○	○	○	0	0	0
	Lawrence	●	●	○	◑	◑	●	55	0	55
	Overland Park	○	○	◑	◑	◑	○	27	0	27
	Topeka	○	○	◑	◑	◑	◑	29	3	32
	Wichita	○	○	◑	◑	◑	○	18	4	22
KENTUCKY	Bowling Green	○	○	○	◑	◑	○	17	0	17
	Frankfort	●	○	○	◑	○	◑	31	0	31
	Lexington	●	○	○	◑	◑	◑	44	9	53
	Louisville	●	○	◑	◑	◑	◑	43	7	50

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# SCORES

STATE	CITY	I. Non-Discrimination	II. Relationship Recognition	III. Municipality as Employer	IV. Services and Programs	V. Law Enforcement	VI. Relationship with LGBT Community	REGULAR POINTS	BONUS POINTS	FINAL SCORE
LOUISIANA	Baton Rouge	○	○	◐	○	○	○	5	2	7
	New Orleans	●	●	◐	●	●	◐	84	7	91
	Shreveport	○	○	◐	○	○	◐	16	0	16
MAINE	Augusta	●	●	◐	◐	◐	○	64	3	67
	Bangor	●	●	◐	◐	○	◐	48	0	48
	Lewiston	●	●	◐	◐	◐	○	59	0	59
	Orono	●	●	◐	◐	○	○	45	2	47
	Portland	●	●	◐	◐	●	●	83	6	89
MARYLAND	Annapolis	◐	●	◐	◐	◐	◐	63	7	70
	Baltimore	●	●	◐	●	●	●	92	9	100
	College Park	◐	●	◐	◐	◐	◐	55	7	62
	Frederick	◐	●	◐	◐	◐	○	50	2	52
	Rockville	●	●	◐	◐	◐	○	58	0	58
MASSACHUSETTS	Amherst	◐	●	○	◐	◐	◐	49	0	49
	Boston	●	●	◐	◐	●	●	92	9	100
	Cambridge	●	●	◐	●	●	●	94	9	100
	Northampton	●	●	◐	◐	◐	◐	73	7	80
	Provincetown	◐	●	◐	◐	◐	◐	67	9	76
	Springfield	◐	●	◐	○	◐	◐	52	4	56
	Worcester	◐	●	◐	◐	◐	◐	53	2	55
MICHIGAN	Ann Arbor	●	●	◐	◐	◐	●	75	13	88
	Detroit	●	○	◐	◐	◐	●	63	9	72
	East Lansing	●	○	◐	◐	●	●	79	7	86
	Ferndale	●	○	◐	◐	◐	◐	40	5	45
	Grand Rapids	●	○	◐	◐	◐	◐	49	7	56
	Lansing	●	○	◐	◐	●	◐	59	7	66
	Pleasant Ridge	●	○	◐	◐	◐	●	53	7	60
	Warren	○	○	○	◐	◐	○	13	2	15
MINNESOTA	Minneapolis	●	●	◐	◐	●	●	88	13	100
	Rochester	●	●	◐	◐	◐	●	61	5	66
	Saint Paul	●	●	◐	◐	●	●	83	13	96

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# SCORES

STATE	CITY							REGULAR POINTS	BONUS POINTS	FINAL SCORE
		I. Non-Discrimination	II. Relationship Recognition	III. Municipality as Employer	IV. Services and Programs	V. Law Enforcement	VI. Relationship with LGBT Community			
MISSISSIPPI	Gulfport	○	○	○	○	◐	○	10	0	10
	Jackson	○	○	○	◐	○	◐	15	2	17
	Southaven	○	○	○	○	○	○	0	0	0
	Starkville	○	○	○	○	○	○	0	0	0
MISSOURI	Columbia	●	●	◐	◐	◐	◐	70	4	74
	Jefferson City	○	○	○	○	◐	○	10	2	12
	Kansas City	●	●	◐	●	●	●	94	7	100
	Springfield	○	○	◐	◐	◐	◐	31	6	37
	St. Louis	●	●	◐	●	●	●	96	9	100
MONTANA	Billings	○	○	○	◐	◐	◐	19	2	21
	Great Falls	○	○	◐	○	◐	○	20	2	22
	Helena	◐	○	◐	◐	◐	◐	48	0	48
	Missoula	●	●	◐	◐	●	●	89	11	100
NEBRASKA	Bellevue	○	○	○	◐	○	○	6	0	6
	Lincoln	○	○	◐	◐	●	◐	42	4	46
	Omaha	◐	○	◐	◐	◐	◐	59	5	64
NEVADA	Carson City	●	●	◐	◐	○	○	53	2	55
	Enterprise (Clark County)	●	●	◐	◐	●	◐	82	8	90
	Henderson	●	●	◐	○	◐	○	53	2	55
	Las Vegas	●	●	◐	◐	●	◐	83	8	91
	North Las Vegas	●	●	◐	○	◐	○	53	0	53
	Paradise (Clark County)	●	●	◐	◐	●	◐	82	8	90
	Reno	●	●	◐	◐	◐	○	59	2	61
NEW HAMPSHIRE	Concord	◐	●	◐	◐	◐	○	53	2	55
	Durham	◐	●	◐	◐	◐	◐	65	6	71
	Manchester	◐	●	◐	◐	◐	○	55	2	57
	Nashua	◐	●	◐	◐	◐	○	48	0	48
NEW JERSEY	Asbury Park	●	●	◐	◐	◐	○	54	5	59
	Jersey City	●	●	◐	●	●	●	96	11	100
	Lambertville	●	●	◐	◐	◐	◐	73	3	76
	New Brunswick	●	●	◐	◐	◐	○	71	6	77

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# SCORES

STATE	CITY	I. Non-Discrimination	II. Relationship Recognition	III. Municipality as Employer	IV. Services and Programs	V. Law Enforcement	VI. Relationship with LGBT Community	REGULAR POINTS	BONUS POINTS	FINAL SCORE
NEW JERSEY	Newark	●	●	◐	◐	◐	●	74	2	76
	Ocean Grove	●	●	◐	◐	◐	◐	74	3	77
	Paterson	●	●	◐	◐	◐	○	60	0	60
	Trenton	●	●	◐	◐	◐	○	55	2	57
NEW MEXICO	Albuquerque	●	○	◐	◐	◐	◐	55	7	62
	Eldorado at Santa Fe (Santa Fe County)	●	○	◐	◐	○	○	37	5	42
	Las Cruces	●	○	◐	◐	○	◐	42	2	44
	Rio Rancho	●	○	◐	◐	○	○	37	0	37
	Santa Fe	●	○	◐	◐	●	●	69	9	78
NEW YORK	Albany	●	●	◐	◐	●	◐	90	9	99
	Buffalo	●	●	◐	◐	◐	○	50	2	52
	New York	●	●	◐	●	●	◐	95	13	100
	Northwest Harbor	●	●	◐	◐	◐	○	60	0	60
	Rochester	●	●	◐	◐	●	●	89	9	98
	Yonkers	●	●	◐	◐	◐	◐	69	0	69
NORTH CAROLINA	Charlotte	○	○	◐	◐	◐	◐	44	7	51
	Durham	○	○	◐	◐	◐	◐	48	8	56
	Fayetteville	○	○	○	◐	◐	○	23	0	23
	Greensboro	○	○	◐	◐	◐	◐	40	2	42
	Raleigh	○	○	◐	●	◐	◐	37	6	43
	Winston-Salem	○	○	◐	◐	◐	◐	34	0	34
NORTH DAKOTA	Bismarck	○	○	○	◐	◐	○	17	0	17
	Fargo	○	○	◐	◐	●	◐	40	9	49
	Grand Forks	○	○	◐	○	◐	●	28	2	30
OHIO	Akron	◐	○	◐	◐	◐	◐	41	7	48
	Cincinnati	●	○	◐	◐	●	●	79	11	90
	Cleveland	●	●	◐	◐	◐	●	79	4	83
	Columbus	●	●	◐	●	◐	●	92	9	100
	Toledo	●	●	◐	◐	◐	●	66	4	70

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# SUCCESS STORY: PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA



The Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce stands for equality in the workplace because it's good for business, and because equality is a value we honor and cherish.

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### **The Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce in 2013 publicly came out in support of local legislation in Philadelphia**

that incentivizes city businesses that voluntarily offer health care benefits to the life partners of their employees. The legislation, offered by City Councilman James Kenney, provides for a tax credit against local business taxes for those companies that elect to provide health coverage to their employees' partners. The law passed Council and was signed by Mayor Michael Nutter earlier this year—the first of its kind in the country.

### **The Chamber of Commerce testified in support of the legislation for two reasons.**

First, we look favorably towards legislation that offers business a voluntary inducement to comply with the substantive matter at issue, in this case, providing health coverage—as opposed to involuntary mandates, which we oppose.

### **Secondly, the Chamber has a long, strong history of supporting diversity and inclusion in the Philadelphia workplace.**

We have a Diversity and Inclusion Committee that regularly meets and promotes more diverse boards and executive positions in the Philadelphia workplace. We carefully survey our member companies on how they value diversity in their daily businesses, and, suggest best practices on how best to advance these values.

Studies show that **businesses that adopt and practice policies promoting a more diverse workplace are businesses that compete better**, attract and retain higher quality workers, and thrive in the marketplace. The Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce stands for equality in the workplace because it's good for business, and because equality is a value we honor and cherish.

### **JOE GRACE**

Director of Public Policy,  
Greater Philadelphia Chamber of  
Commerce

# SCORES

STATE	CITY	I. Non-Discrimination	II. Relationship Recognition	III. Municipality as Employer	IV. Services and Programs	V. Law Enforcement	VI. Relationship with LGBT Community	REGULAR POINTS	BONUS POINTS	FINAL SCORE
OKLAHOMA	Norman	○	○	◐	◐	◑	◑	31	2	33
	Oklahoma City	○	○	◐	◐	◑	◑	26	2	28
	Tulsa	○	○	◐	◑	◑	◑	41	5	46
OREGON	Eugene	●	●	◐	◐	●	●	89	4	93
	Portland	●	●	●	◐	●	●	95	13	100
	Salem	●	●	◐	●	●	◐	89	2	91
PENNSYLVANIA	Allentown	●	○	◐	◐	○	●	46	4	50
	Harrisburg	●	●	◐	◐	◐	◐	71	5	76
	New Hope	●	●	◐	●	◐	●	80	9	89
	Philadelphia	●	●	●	●	●	●	100	13	100
	Pittsburgh	●	●	◐	◐	◐	◐	69	3	72
	State College (University Park)	◐	●	◐	◐	◐	◐	63	0	63
RHODE ISLAND	Cranston	●	●	◐	◐	◐	○	67	0	67
	Kingston (South Kingstown)	●	●	◐	◐	○	○	58	0	58
	Providence	●	●	◐	◐	◐	●	77	4	81
	Warwick	●	●	◐	◐	◐	●	67	2	69
SOUTH CAROLINA	Charleston	◐	○	◐	◐	◐	◐	47	7	54
	Columbia	◐	○	◐	◐	●	◐	52	9	61
	North Charleston	◐	○	◐	◐	◐	◐	40	7	47
SOUTH DAKOTA	Aberdeen	○	○	○	○	◐	○	10	0	10
	Brookings	○	○	◐	◐	○	◐	29	5	34
	Pierre	○	○	○	◐	◐	○	13	0	13
	Rapid City	○	○	○	◐	◐	○	17	2	19
	Sioux Falls	○	○	◐	◐	◐	○	22	2	24
TENNESSEE	Chattanooga	○	○	○	○	◐	○	10	5	15
	Knoxville	○	○	◐	◐	◐	●	34	4	38
	Memphis	○	○	◐	◐	◐	◐	34	6	40
	Nashville	○	○	◐	●	◐	●	50	11	61

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# SCORES

STATE	CITY	I. Non-Discrimination	II. Relationship Recognition	III. Municipality as Employer	IV. Services and Programs	V. Law Enforcement	VI. Relationship with LGBT Community	REGULAR POINTS	BONUS POINTS	FINAL SCORE
TEXAS	Amarillo	○	○	○	◐	◑	○	16	0	16
	Arlington	○	○	○	○	◐	◐	11	0	11
	Austin	●	●	◐	◐	◐	●	89	11	100
	Brownsville	●	○	◐	◐	○	◐	38	0	38
	Corpus Christi	○	○	○	◐	◐	○	17	2	19
	Dallas	●	○	◐	◐	●	◐	76	9	85
	El Paso	◐	○	◐	◐	◐	●	45	6	51
	Fort Worth	●	○	◐	●	●	◐	82	9	91
	Garland	○	○	○	◐	◐	○	17	0	17
	Grand Prairie	○	○	◐	◐	◐	○	21	0	21
	Houston	◐	○	◐	◐	●	●	54	9	63
	Irving	◐	○	○	○	◐	○	16	0	16
	Laredo	○	○	○	○	○	○	0	2	2
	Lubbock	○	○	◐	○	○	○	5	0	5
	Plano	○	○	○	○	◐	◐	12	2	14
San Antonio	◐	○	◐	◐	●	●	75	11	86	
UTAH	Provo	○	○	○	○	◐	○	10	0	10
	Salt Lake City	◐	●	◐	●	◐	●	80	7	87
	West Valley City	◐	○	◐	◐	◐	●	42	0	42
VERMONT	Burlington	●	●	◐	◐	◐	◐	66	7	73
	Essex	●	●	◐	◐	◐	○	54	0	54
	Montpelier	●	●	◐	◐	◐	◐	68	0	68
	South Burlington	●	●	◐	◐	◐	◐	58	0	58
VIRGINIA	Alexandria	◐	○	◐	◐	●	●	57	13	70
	Arlington County	◐	○	◐	●	●	●	65	11	76
	Chesapeake	○	○	◐	○	◐	○	15	0	15
	Fairfax County	○	○	○	◐	●	◐	34	6	40
	Newport News	○	○	○	◐	◐	○	20	0	20
	Norfolk	○	○	○	○	◐	○	10	2	12
	Richmond	○	○	◐	◐	◐	◐	32	4	36
	Virginia Beach	○	○	◐	◐	◐	◐	28	4	32

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# SCORES

STATE	CITY	I. Non-Discrimination	II. Relationship Recognition	III. Municipality as Employer	IV. Services and Programs	V. Law Enforcement	VI. Relationship with LGBT Community	REGULAR POINTS	BONUS POINTS	FINAL SCORE
WASHINGTON	Olympia	●	●	◐	◐	◐	◐	65	2	67
	Seattle	●	●	●	●	●	●	100	13	100
	Spokane	●	●	◐	◐	◐	◐	69	2	71
	Tacoma	●	●	◐	◐	◐	●	83	7	90
	Vancouver	●	●	◐	◐	◐	◐	62	4	66
	Vashon (King County)	●	●	●	◐	◐	◐	86	9	95
WEST VIRGINIA	Charleston	●	○	◐	◐	◐	◐	60	4	64
	Huntington	○	○	○	◐	○	○	13	0	13
	Morgantown	●	○	◐	◐	◐	○	57	0	57
	Parkersburg	○	○	○	◐	◐	○	16	0	16
WISCONSIN	Green Bay	◐	●	◐	◐	◐	◐	46	2	48
	Madison	●	●	◐	◐	●	●	91	9	100
	Milwaukee	●	●	◐	◐	●	◐	83	8	91
WYOMING	Casper	○	○	○	○	◐	○	10	0	10
	Cheyenne	○	○	○	○	◐	○	10	4	14
	Laramie	○	○	○	○	◐	○	10	0	10

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# SUCCESS STORY: EQUALITY OHIO



Somewhere in these processes, I “fell in love” with helping municipalities find their pathways to equality.

In 2005, I became the founding Executive Director of Equality Toledo. From our organizational inception, we worked with the University of Toledo to create a Domestic Partner benefits offering. This was followed by an effort to pass the first City Council-approved Domestic Partner Registry in Ohio. Somewhere in these processes, I “fell in love” with helping municipalities find their pathways to equality.

In 2008, I accepted a position with Equality Ohio and have continued to assist municipalities in passing inclusive, forward moving ordinances. **I have been able to act as a resource, offering advice, data and samples for local advocates.** Occasionally, I have the opportunity to be more involved as I was with the registry process in Dayton, Ohio.

For years, I have tracked municipal LGBT legislative work across Ohio.

Because of my experience assisting Ohio municipalities on their legislative journeys, I have been helping with the Human Rights Campaign Foundation’s Municipal Equality Index (MEI) for the last two years. Given the increasing level of exposure from the MEI, cities are working hard to improve their profiles.

**It’s a growing trend, and LGBT-friendly cities are getting creative in how they compete to be more welcoming.** This year I was able to consult with City of Toledo leaders to discuss the ways in which Toledo can be even more inclusive. I love being a part of growing equality and helping Ohio’s municipalities become the very best they can be.

**KIM WELTER**  
Deputy Director

# TAKE ACTION FOR EQUALITY

## Bring Equality to Your Hometown

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The scoring rubric applied by the MEI is very specific, and a detailed, long-form scorecard for each city rated is available at [www.hrc.org/mei](http://www.hrc.org/mei).

These scorecards make clear which categories resulted in an award of points to the municipality and which did not. Once you know which parts of the scorecard are areas of opportunity for improvement, you should begin investigating how your city can go about changing that policy.

For help with this, please feel free to contact the Human Rights Campaign Foundation at [mei@hrc.org](mailto:mei@hrc.org) or your local Equality Federation Institute member.

### **1. LEARN ABOUT YOUR CITY'S CURRENT SCORE**

The best place to begin is by examining the city's scorecard carefully. Only summaries of each city's scorecard are printed in this report; go online to [www.hrc.org/mei](http://www.hrc.org/mei) to see the full-length, detailed scorecard for each city.

### **2. TAKE STOCK OF THE OPPORTUNITIES**

No city scored every point available on the 2013 MEI. Every city assessed has an opportunity to do better in 2014, and identifying that opportunity for improvement is the second step.

### **3. SHARE AND EDUCATE**

Use the MEI to start conversations with your city council representative, your neighbors, and your friends. Impress upon these people the opportunities you've identified for your city. For help doing this, contact HRC Foundation at [mei@hrc.org](mailto:mei@hrc.org) and your local member of the Equality Federation.

### **4. MAKE EQUALITY HAPPEN**

Work with your city leadership to turn opportunity into reality. See your score on the 2014 MEI improve. Repeat.



A detailed, long-form scorecard for each city rated is available at [www.hrc.org/mei](http://www.hrc.org/mei).

# CHANGES TO THE MEI IN 2014

## New Point Distribution and Standards

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**The MEI 2014 will roll out an updated scoring system that will include a new point distribution and more rigorous standards.**

**These updates reflect a changing legal landscape and the maturing of the project.** Cities rated in 2013 were alerted to these changes during the 2013 evaluation process.

**There are two major ways in which the scoring for the MEI 2014 will be different from scoring in previous years.** First, there will be some changes to the scorecard itself. Second, we will be holding cities to a higher, more specific standard in awarding points for all criteria.

A revised scorecard for 2014 is reflected on the following page. It will continue to reflect 100 standard points and 20 bonus points.

### UPDATES INCLUDE

- Transgender-inclusive healthcare benefits have been converted into standard points, reflecting the increased accessibility of these benefits by cities across the country.
- Human Rights Commissions will be split into standard and bonus points to emphasize the importance of a commission having enforcement ability.
- Two categories are being condensed: pre-emption of DP registries will now be accounted for in Facing State Restrictions, and Engagement with the LGBT Community will now be folded into City Leadership.
- Services for Vulnerable Populations will be expanded to have each of the four components be worth two bonus points rather than two bonus points total. Other point allocations have also been tweaked.

The 2014 MEI will roll out an updated scoring system.

# 2014 MEI SCORECARD



## CITY, STATE 1/2 2014 MUNICIPAL EQUALITY INDEX SCORECARD

### I. Non-Discrimination Laws

This category evaluates whether discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity is prohibited by the city, county, or state in areas of employment, housing, and public accommodations.

	STATE	COUNTY	CITY	AVAILABLE
Employment				
Housing				
Public Accommodations				
<b>SCORE</b>	<b>X out of 18</b>			

### II. Relationship Recognition

Marriage, civil unions, and comprehensive domestic partnerships are matters of state policy; cities and counties have only the power to create domestic partner registries.

	STATE	COUNTY	CITY	AVAILABLE
Marriage Equality, Civil Unions, or Domestic Partnerships				
Municipal Domestic Partner Registry				
<b>SCORE</b>	<b>X out of 12</b>			

### III. Municipality as Employer

By offering equivalent benefits and protections to LGBT employees, and by awarding contracts to fair-minded businesses, municipalities commit themselves to treating LGBT employees equally.

	CITY	AVAILABLE
Non-Discrimination in City Employment		
Domestic Partner Health Benefits		
Transgender-Inclusive Healthcare Benefits		
Legal Dependent Benefits		
Equivalent Family Leave		
City Contractor Non-Discrimination Ordinance		
City Contractor Equal Benefits Ordinance		
<b>SCORE</b>	<b>X out of 29</b>	
<b>BONUS</b> Grossing Up of Employee Benefits		
<b>BONUS</b> Municipality is a Welcoming Place to Work		

PTS FOR SEXUAL ORIENTATION PTS FOR GENDER IDENTITY BONUS PTS for criteria not accessible to all cities at this time.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT CITY SELECTION, CRITERIA OR THE MEI SCORING SYSTEM, PLEASE VISIT [HRC.ORG/MEI](http://HRC.ORG/MEI). All cities rated were provided their scorecard in advance of publication and given the opportunity to submit revisions. For feedback regarding a particular city's scorecard, please email [mei@hrc.org](mailto:mei@hrc.org).

[hrc.org/mei](http://hrc.org/mei)

## IV. Municipal Services

This section assesses the efforts of the city to ensure LGBT constituents are included in city services and programs.

	STATE	COUNTY	CITY	AVAILABLE
Human Rights Commission			X	4
LGBT Liaison in the Mayor's Office			X	5
Enumerated Anti-Bullying School Policies	X X	X X	X X	3 3
<b>SCORE</b>			<b>X out of 15</b>	
<b>BONUS</b>	Enforcement mechanism in Human Rights Commission		+X	+3
<b>BONUS</b>	City provides services to LGBT youth		+X	+2
<b>BONUS</b>	City provides services to LGBT homeless		+X	+2
<b>BONUS</b>	City provides services to LGBT elderly		+X	+2
<b>BONUS</b>	City provides services to people living with HIV/AIDS		+X	+2

## V. Law Enforcement

Fair enforcement of the law includes responsible reporting of hate crimes and engaging with the LGBT community in a thoughtful and respectful way.

	CITY	AVAILABLE
LGBT Police Liaison or Task Force	X	8
Reported 2011 Hate Crimes Statistics to the FBI	X	10
<b>SCORE</b>		<b>X out of 18</b>

## VI. Relationship with the LGBT Community

This category measures the city leadership's commitment to fully include the LGBT community and to advocate for full equality.

	CITY	AVAILABLE		
Leadership's Public Position on LGBT Equality	X	5		
Leadership's Pro-Equality Legislative or Policy Efforts	X	3		
<b>SCORE</b>		<b>X out of 8</b>		
<b>BONUS</b>	Openly LGBT elected or appointed municipal leaders		+X	+3
<b>BONUS</b>	Cities are pro-equality despite restrictive state law		+X	+2

**TOTAL SCORE XXX + TOTAL BONUS XX = Final Score XXX**

CANNOT EXCEED 100

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Cathryn Oakley is Legislative Counsel, State and Municipal Advocacy at the Human Rights Campaign Foundation. In addition to conducting, managing, and publishing the Municipal Equality Index, she is responsible for assisting state and local legislators and advocates in enacting laws that further LGBT equality. She is a member of HRC Foundation's field team.

Cathryn is a member of the Virginia bar and practiced family law before joining the Human Rights Campaign Foundation. She is a graduate of George Mason University School of Law and Smith College.

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## THE MEI TEAM

**The 2013 MEI is a project that requires a significant breadth and depth of expertise to pull off, and fortunately the team of people who support this project is more than up to the task.**

As ever, this project simply would not have been possible without Sarah Warbelow and Whitney Lovell, each of whom dispensed truly incredible amounts of wisdom and support—not to mention elbow grease—and are responsible for making this project actually happen.

This year the MEI owes a particular debt of gratitude to Michael Porcello, Research Fellow Extraordinaire, who provided vital research, logistical, and moral support to the MEI 2013. The dramatic expansion of this project would not have been possible without him, and the MEI benefited greatly from his months of hard work collecting, managing and assessing thousands of pieces of data. We offer him a heartfelt acknowledgement of everything that he contributed to this project and we will miss him next year.

Pamela O'Leary joined the MEI team this year and jumped in right away—we are thankful for her enthusiasm, dedication, and many hard hours of work. Her contribution was critical to the project's success and we were glad to have had her on board.

We owe many thanks to Jessie Sheffield, Sam Anderson, Limor Finkel and Jennifer Pike who jumped in when we needed extra hands, and also to the law fellows and interns who helped out throughout the process. Paul Guequierre has been an indispensable friend to and a voice of municipal equality. Aisha Satterwhite has been a patient and helpful guide. Janice Hughes and Bob Villaflor made sure everything was beautiful, informative and on time, and Soung Wiser and Caroline Brickell of The General Design Co. are responsible for the incredible design.

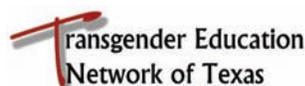
## **FINALLY, BUT ESPECIALLY, WE THANK OUR PARTNERS AT THE EQUALITY FEDERATION INSTITUTE.**

This partnership has been a delight and has brought real value to the project from the start. It has been a particular pleasure to work so closely with Ian Palmquist, and the MEI owes a real debt of gratitude to Ian, A.J. Bockelman, Brandie Balken, Chuck Smith, Katie Belanger and Ted Martin for sharing their thoughtful advice about growing and improving the MEI. We thank those Equality Federation partners who shared their story in this publication. The participation of so many state leaders has made this project a much more robust and useful educational tool, and a very special thanks goes out to every Equality Federation member who provided feedback—**please see the facing page for the logos of groups that were particularly engaged in making the MEI a success this year.** We look forward to working with you again next year for MEI 2014!

For questions or additional information, please contact [mei@hrc.org](mailto:mei@hrc.org).

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The Municipal Equality Index would not have been possible without the valuable contributions made by state and local advocates. A particular thanks therefore goes out to the following:



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