

As presidents of colleges and universities in the great state of Indiana, we write in support of strong hate crime legislation, and join regional business groups who call for a law which would authorize judges “to enhance penalties against criminals who harmed others based on their disability, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation or gender identity.” We stand with Governor Holcomb when he says, “No law can stop evil, but we should be clear that our state stands with the victims & their voices will not be silenced. For that reason, it is my intent that Indiana be 1 of 46 states with hate crimes legislation— not 1 of 5 states without it.” We call upon our elected representatives to act now in support of all Hoosiers, regardless of appearance, location, orientations or religious beliefs.

Indiana is home to some of the nation’s most respected colleges and universities and is a state with wonderful assets and a welcoming spirit. This is a powerful opportunity to make certain that our students and citizens are afforded the same protections they are in all but five other states.

The years a student spends in college are important and impactful. Young people from across the state, the nation, and the world come to our campuses to live and learn, and to understand more about how to live in an increasingly complex and diverse world. It is our job as college presidents to ensure that we create a fertile environment for those lessons to take root. It is our responsibility to make certain that each student feels welcomed, wanted, and able to do their best work. The very future of our country depends upon this effort.

We commend the governor for his stand and join him in calling on the Indiana General Assembly to enact hate crimes legislation for the good of all Hoosiers.

Sincerely,

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