



Police Departments

Police Departments Across the Country Agree: There's been no increase in public safety incidents in cities and states with nondiscrimination laws

We all care about safety and privacy in restrooms. Which is why it's important to remember that nondiscrimination laws protecting lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people have been around for a long time. In fact, 18 states and over 200 cities across the country have passed and successfully implemented laws that protect lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people from discrimination in public accommodations—and there's been no increase in public safety incidents in restrooms in any of these cities or states.

However, those who oppose protecting gay and transgender people from discrimination falsely claim that these laws put the safety of women and children at risk — they say these laws can be abused by predators to go into women's facilities. However, the claims have no basis in fact.

About half of the U.S. population lives in a city or state that has a transgender-inclusive nondiscrimination law. Here are what police officials from places with these laws say about whether or not these laws threaten public safety:

Spokespeople from the Des Moines, Albuquerque, Baltimore San Francisco, Los Angeles, and New York city police departments (<http://www.washingtonblade.com/2016/03/31/predictions-of-trans-bathroom-harassment-unfounded/>) said they knew of no problems in facilities relating to California and New York City's non-discrimination laws – which have all been in place for over a decade.

The Des Moines (Iowa) Police Department (<http://mediamatters.org/research/2014/03/20/15-experts-debunk-right-wing-transgender-bathro/198533>) said "We have not seen that." when asked if they there were any cases of sexual assault related to the state's non-discrimination statute, passed in 2007.

The Cambridge (Massachusetts) Police Superintendent (<http://mediamatters.org/research/2014/03/20/15-experts-debunk-right-wing-transgender-bathro/198533>) said "there have been no incidents of men dressing up as women to commit crimes in female bathrooms and using the city ordinance as a defense."

Rehoboth, Delaware Police Chief Keith Banks (<http://www.washingtonblade.com/2016/03/31/predictions-of-trans-bathroom-harassment-unfounded/>) said, "We've had no concerns on this and no complaints have been made, and we have observed none," concerning Delaware's non-discrimination law.

The Minneapolis Police Department (<http://www.washingtonblade.com/2016/03/31/predictions-of-trans-bathroom-harassment-unfounded/>) said that fears about sexual assault are "not even remotely" a problem, and the notion of men posing as transgender women to enter women's restrooms to commit sex crimes "sounds a little silly." Minneapolis was the first city to pass a transgender-inclusive nondiscrimination law over 40 years ago, in 1975.

The Las Vegas Police Department (<http://www.washingtonblade.com/2016/03/31/predictions-of-trans-bathroom-harassment-unfounded/>) was asked if they had seen any cases of sexual assault related to the state's non-discrimination statutes. Their response? "The answer would be no."

The Albuquerque Police Department (<http://www.washingtonblade.com/2016/03/31/predictions-of-trans-bathroom-harassment-unfounded/>) said, "We are unaware of any cases of assault" due to New Mexico's non-discrimination law, which passed in 2003.

A Portland, Oregon Police Department representative (<http://www.washingtonblade.com/2016/03/31/predictions-of-trans-bathroom-harassment-unfounded/>) said, "I have never heard of any issues" of assault relating to the state's non-discrimination statute, which passed in 2007.

Detective Nicole Monroe, a public information officer with the Baltimore Police Department (<http://www.washingtonblade.com/2016/03/31/predictions-of-trans-bathroom-harassment-unfounded/>), said worries about transgender-inclusive policies are "the most ridiculous thing I've ever heard." Baltimore passed its law in 2002 and Maryland passed a state law in 2014.



"As a Marylander and a law enforcement professional, I am proud that Maryland enacted the Fairness for All Marylanders Act of 2014. Transgender people are members of our community and should feel safe and protected in their community. As such, I am not aware of any public safety incidents initiated by transgender people in public restrooms or elsewhere. In fact, transgender people are frequently the victims of unwarranted crimes and discrimination because of their gender identity. Supporting the transgender community is good public policy, and the right thing to do."

-Major Irene A. Burks, MSM, Assistant Inspector General, Prince George's County, MD Police Department

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