Disrupting Disparities for LGBTQ Older Adults

Vote YES for SB3490 & HB4656 (Sen. Villa & Rep. Collins)

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LGBTQ people and people living with HIV face unique challenges as they age because of a lack of affirming resources and services and stigmatization. SB 3490 keeps Illinois moving forward as a leader in advancing equity and affirming care for LGBTQ older adults and older adults living with HIV.

The Bill will:
• Create a 3-year Illinois Commission on LGBTQ Aging to review systems, create opportunities for testimony and hearings, and recommend policy changes
• At the Department on Aging, require the Director of Aging to appoint an LGBTQ Older Adult Advocate to ensure the needs and experiences of LGBTQ older adults and older adults living with HIV are considered and incorporated throughout the agency’s programming and policymaking
• Require providers that are funded by or contract with the Department on Aging complete LGBTQ older adult awareness and competency training

The Challenges:
Although a key part of Illinois’ rapidly growing elder population, LGBTQ older adults remain largely invisible. Though resilient, LGBTQ older adults face significant disparities that are rooted in discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, racism, a lack of legal and social recognition, a reliance on chosen family, reduced access to inclusive services, and other social determinants of health and well-being. Disparities are often compounded and thus even greater for the estimated 1 in 5 LGBTQ older adults of color. And, according to the CDC, nearly half of people in the United States living with diagnosed HIV are aged 50 and older.

In October 2021, AARP of Illinois and SAGE presented a new, ground-breaking report, Disrupting Disparities: Solutions for LGBTQ Illinoisians Age 50+. The solutions in SB 3490 are based on findings in the report as well as years of work by advocacy organizations and direct service providers that serve LGBTQ older adults and older adults living with HIV in Illinois.
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sage Advocacy & Services for LGBT Elders

We refuse to be invisible

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