



FACT SHEET

# How Trump's FY 2019 Budget Hurts LGBTQ People

By Shabab Ahmed Mirza February 16, 2018

In spite of his claims to the contrary, President Donald Trump's actions over the past year have made it clear that anti-LGBTQ hate is a core part of his agenda. His fiscal year 2019 budget is the latest attack against LGBTQ individuals and their families. Trump wants to pay for the \$1.5 trillion in tax cuts that he gave to millionaires and corporations last year by taking away vital and popular programs like Medicaid and Social Security. These are just some of the many ways this budget would threaten the financial security and wellbeing of LGBTQ people.

- **Dismantles the healthcare system:** The Affordable Care Act (ACA) has helped many in the LGBTQ community gain access to health insurance coverage, but Trump's proposed budget takes another stab at undermining its key provisions. It would repeal the ACA and make deep cuts to Medicaid, reducing federal spending on health care by \$675 billion over 10 years. This would jeopardize health care for an estimated 1.8 million LGBTQ adults who are covered under Medicaid, including 1 in 3 LGBTQ adults living with a disability, and 1 in 4 low-income LGBTQ adults.<sup>1</sup>

It may also threaten health care access for the 65 percent of LGBTQ adults with pre-existing conditions.<sup>2</sup> Trump's budget calls for "legislation modeled closely after the Graham-Cassidy-Heller-Johnson bill," which would open the door for insurance companies to discriminate against individuals with pre-existing conditions in states that choose to allow it.<sup>3</sup>

The budget would also make it harder for LGBTQ families to afford insurance by repealing the ACA's premium tax credits for the marketplace and replacing that funding with block grants to the states that will shrink over time. The health insurance marketplace is particularly important for same-sex couples, who may find it harder to get coverage for their spouse or partner under their employer's plan. Lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB) individuals were half as likely as heterosexual individuals to be covered under a spouse or partner's employer.<sup>4</sup>

- **Undermines economic security:** The budget would attach punitive time limits to rental assistance, taking housing away from struggling individuals and families if they cannot find work or get enough hours at their job. Trump is attempting to dress up his cuts to vital benefits under the guise of “promoting work,” however these time limits simply punish people by kicking them off their benefits if they cannot meet stringent work requirements—especially LGBTQ people, who face discrimination in hiring.<sup>5</sup> In addition, the proposed budget would eliminate Community Development Block Grants, which are used to create more affordable housing and provide essential services to low-income communities. It is already difficult enough for LGBTQ people to access affordable housing. Studies have found that landlords and property owners discriminate against otherwise qualified LGBTQ applicants in the selection process, such as discouraging a same-sex couple from applying or quoting a higher rental price for a transgender applicant.<sup>6</sup>
- **Slashes access to food assistance:** 1 in 4 LGB adults aged 18 to 44 rely on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly known as food stamps.<sup>7</sup> The Trump budget proposes \$17 billion in cuts to SNAP in 2019, and \$214 billion over the next decade. SNAP is a critical benefit for LGBTQ families—an estimated 2.2 million LGBT adults experienced being unable to afford food for themselves or for their families in the past year, according to one 2016 study.<sup>8</sup>
- **Undermines access to education:** Schools should be a safe place for all students, but the budget would make it easier for schools to ignore LGBTQ protections. The Trump budget supports “school choice” vouchers, which would use taxpayer dollars to pay for private and religious schools, which are unaccountable in the same ways as public school. Millions of taxpayer dollars have already gone toward such schools, many of which have failed to protect the rights of their LGBTQ students.<sup>9</sup> Trump also proposes to cut federal student aid dollars, making it harder for middle- and low-income LGBTQ students to afford to go to college.
- **Jeopardizes access to justice:** Without access to justice, there is no equality. The LGBTQ community’s unique vulnerability to poverty would make the elimination of the Legal Services Corporation as proposed in the Trump budget particularly harmful.<sup>10</sup> This federal agency, which helps low- and middle-income LGBTQ people receive civil legal aid, would be shuttered under the Trump budget. Also under threat is the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB), which protects LGBTQ Americans against credit discrimination.<sup>11</sup> The budget would drastically undermine the independence of the consumer watchdog agency, in line with Trump’s support of big corporations over middle- and low-income consumers.

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## Endnotes

- 1 Kellan Baker and Laura E. Durso, "Why Repealing the Affordable Care Act Is Bad Medicine for LGBT Communities," Center for American Progress, March 22, 2017, available at <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/lgbt/news/2017/03/22/428970/repealing-affordable-care-act-bad-medicine-lgbt-communities>.
- 2 Kellan Baker and others, "The Senate Health Care Bill Would Be Devastating for LGBTQ People," Center for American Progress, July 6, 2017, available at <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/lgbt/news/2017/07/06/435452/senate-health-care-bill-devastating-lgbtq-people/>.
- 3 White House Office of Management and Budget, *Major Savings and Reforms: Budget of the U.S. Government Fiscal Year 2018* (2018), available at <https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/whitehouse.gov/files/omb/budget/fy2018/msar.pdf>.
- 4 Baker and Durso, "Why Repealing the Affordable Care Act Is Bad Medicine for LGBT Communities."
- 5 White House Office of Management and Budget, *Major Savings and Reforms: Budget of the U.S. Government Fiscal Year 2018*; Sarah McBride and others, "We the People: Why Congress and U.S. States Must Pass Comprehensive LGBT Nondiscrimination Protections" (Washington: Center for American Progress, 2014), available at <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/lgbt/reports/2014/12/10/102804/we-the-people>.
- 6 McBride and others, "We the People;" Jamie Langowski and others, "Transcending Prejudice: Gender Identity and Expression- Based Discrimination in the Metro Boston Rental Housing Market," *Yale Journal of Law & Feminism*, 29 (2) (Forthcoming), available at [https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=2941810](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2941810).
- 7 Taylor N.T. Brown, Adam P. Romero, and Gary J. Gates, "Food Insecurity and SNAP Participation in the LGBT Community" (Los Angeles: The Williams Institute, 2016), available at <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/research/lgbt-food-insecurity-2016/>.
- 8 Ibid.
- 9 Rebecca Klein, "These Schools Get Millions Of Tax Dollars To Discriminate Against LGBTQ Students," HuffPost, December 15, 2017, available at [https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/discrimination-lgbt-private-religious-schools\\_us\\_5a32a45de4b00dbbcb5ba0be](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/discrimination-lgbt-private-religious-schools_us_5a32a45de4b00dbbcb5ba0be); Kimberly Quick, "Second-Class Students: When Vouchers Exclude," The Century Foundation, January 11, 2017, available at <https://tcf.org/content/commentary/second-class-students-vouchers-exclude/>.
- 10 M.V. Lee Badgett, Laura E. Durso, Alyssa Schneebaum, "New Patterns of Poverty in the Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Community" (Los Angeles: The Williams Institute, 2013), available at <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/research/census-lgbt-demographics-studies/lgbt-poverty-update-june-2013/>.
- 11 Laura Durso, "We the People: LGBT Americans and Access to Credit" (Washington: Center for American Progress, 2015), available at <https://cdn.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/NonDisc-Credit-4.10.pdf>.