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**President Biden Aims to Advance Health Equity for Intersex People  
In Recent Executive Order on LGBTQI Equality**

**Washington, D.C.** — interACT: Advocates for Intersex Youth welcomes President Biden’s Executive Order on LGBTQI Equality, which takes historic steps forward in recognizing and protecting intersex people. The Executive Order directs federal agencies to strengthen protections against discrimination based on sex characteristics in child welfare and long-term care settings, advance data collection on intersex experiences, and issue a landmark report on advancing intersex health equity within one year.

The following statement can be attributed to interACT Communications Director Maddie Moran:

“These are essential and historic steps forward at a time when it couldn’t be more urgent. Intersex youth and adults are increasingly coming out and being visible about their natural diversity even as state-sponsored discrimination and violent extremism increasingly target LGBTQI+ youth and families. interACT will work closely with federal officials and our communities to ensure the landmark health equity report will accurately portray the natural variation our bodies represent, as well as the harmful interventions still used to ‘normalize’ intersex infants and young children, while making a clear call for these practices to change.

“We also welcome the commitment to action to ‘safeguard LGBTQI+ youth from dangerous practices like so-called “conversion therapy,” and we hope it will lead to clear rules ending the use of federal funds for both conversion therapy and non-consensual surgeries on intersex children.

“Today, we thank President Biden and call on his Administration to take the next sorely needed steps by swiftly issuing long-awaited and overdue rules to protect intersex youth from medicalized abuses and discrimination in education.”

The Order calls for the Secretary of Health and Human Services to develop and publish “guidance on non-discrimination protections on the basis of sex, including sexual orientation, gender identity, and sex characteristics, and other rights of LGBTQI+ older adults in long-term

care settings,” as well as to “strengthen non-discrimination protections on the basis of sex, including sexual orientation, gender identity, and sex characteristics” in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems, in part by addressing “the over-representation of LGBTQI+ youth” in those systems and the “misuse of” those systems “to target LGBTQI+ youth and families.” Parents of intersex children have shared harrowing stories of being threatened with child welfare system involvement if they did not consent to unnecessary “normalizing” surgeries on their intersex infants and young children, underscoring the urgent need for federal action and oversight to prevent these abuses.

The Order further instructs the Secretary of HHS to “establish an initiative to address the health disparities facing LGBTQI+ youth and adults, take steps to prevent LGBTQI+ suicide, and address the barriers and exclusionary policies” that prevent LGBTQI+ individuals from receiving quality care. This initiative will include a specific report “on promising practices for advancing health equity for intersex individuals,” to be issued within one year. The development of this report will set a new bar for engagement on intersex rights and well-being by the federal government, joining recent impactful examples such as the DOJ’s 2021 update to the Title IX Legal Manual, which clarified that the reasoning of *Bostock* “applies with equal force to discrimination against intersex people.”

While stopping short of a clear directive to collect data on LGBTQI+ people in federal surveys, the Order instructs agencies to “advance” data collection, including on variations in sex characteristics, through a government “Evidence Agenda” and agency progress reports.

interACT welcomes the Executive Order’s expressions of support for ensuring access to necessary healthcare, including gender-affirming care, and for ending anti-LGBTQI+ conversion therapy. A 2020 [consensus study by the National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine](#) likened psychological efforts to change a youth’s gender identity or sexual orientation and efforts to “normalize” children’s intersex traits through surgery, concluding that both are “dangerous to the health and well-being of sexual and gender diverse people.” A [recent report by the Trevor Project](#) shows that LGBTQ youth who are intersex are more likely than non-intersex LGBTQ youth to experience efforts to change their sexual orientation or gender identity, and more than twice as likely to be subjected to these “change efforts” by a healthcare professional. Intersex youth who reported experiencing “change efforts” also reported more than twice the rate of suicide attempts within the past year compared to intersex youth who did not face change efforts.