

January 28, 2021

Senator Scott Weiner
Assembly Member Evan Low
Members of the California LGBTQ Legislative Caucus
State Capitol
PO Box 942849
Sacramento, CA 94249-0028

Dear Senator Weiner, Assembly Member Low, and the California LGBTQ Legislative Caucus:

In 2017, California passed AB1887, a law that bans state-funded travel to specified states with anti-LGBTQ laws. These currently include Alabama, Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, and Texas. While the law allows for several exceptions, none permit state-funded travel for LGBTQ-oriented research and education or indeed for historical scholarship of any kind.

While we support the principles underlying AB1887 in promoting equitable LGBTQ-related policies in other states, the law has limited the ability of faculty, students, and others who work or study at state higher education institutions in California and historians in other state agencies to conduct research, deliver presentations, or participate in conferences and workshops that would also support social change on LGBTQ or other equity issues in some of the very places where that work is most needed. We are especially concerned that this boycott restricts the work of graduate students and early career scholars, preventing them from completing research that would actually showcase the significance of LGBTQ life, among other pressing subjects, in targeted states. The boycott as currently construed could affect the scope and quality of their work, and it might also impede the ability of some of the state's top institutions to recruit and retain scholars working on LGBTQ issues.

At the request of its Committee on LGBTQ Status in the Profession, the American Historical Association urges the California State Legislature to amend the list of exceptions to AB1887 to permit state-funded travel for research and educational initiatives related to the discipline of history, broadly conceived, including LGBTQ culture, health, law, and politics.

Sincerely,



Jacqueline Jones
President, 2021