

From: Keating, Kathleen (HOU)

Sent: Wednesday, May 11, 2011 3:28 PM

To: HOU-DL - HOUSE AIDES; HOU-DL - HOUSE REPS; SEN-DL-ALLSTAFF; SEN-DL-SENATORS

Subject: Report on Financial Cost of Discrimination

Dear Colleagues,

You may have seen the [article](#) today in the Business section of *The Boston Globe* regarding the economic costs of discrimination against transgender people. A report, released today, puts the cost at nearly \$3 million annually for insurance coverage costs alone.

I welcome you to read the [article](#), text of which I am also including below.

Sincerely,

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Transgender bias in workplace costs millions, study says State spending on insurance for jobless is cited

By Katie Johnston Chase

Globe Staff / May 11, 2011

Employment discrimination against transgender Massachusetts residents is costing the state millions of dollars each year in increased payouts for public health insurance benefits and other costs, according to a report being released today.

The study, by the Williams Institute for Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Law and Public Policy, a think tank at the University of California Los Angeles, found that more than three-quarters of 283 transgender Massachusetts residents surveyed have experienced some form of employment discrimination, including losing a job, being denied a promotion, or not being hired at all. As a result, the state is paying out nearly \$3 million for public health insurance coverage to transgender residents who have lost their jobs due to bias, according to the study.

The institute estimates that 0.5 percent of the Massachusetts population, or 33,000 residents, identify themselves as transgender.

“When that many people face discrimination, when we trace out the economic consequences, the dollars add up very quickly,” said Lee Badgett, research director at the Williams Institute and

director of the Center for Public Policy & Administration at the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

A state official declined to comment on the dollar amount, but said discrimination against transgender residents is a problem.

“Any kind of discrimination definitely costs our state not only in dollars lost,” said Barbara Green, spokeswoman for the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination, “but it also costs our state in its reputation as one of the cradles of liberty and as a state that has been a leader in antidiscrimination efforts.”

The study is based on a 2009 survey by the National Center for Transgender Equality and the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, which polled more than 6,400 transgender people nationally. The institute, which has not analyzed data for any other state, focused on Massachusetts because of a bill in the Legislature that would ban discrimination against transgender workers, Badgett said. Thirteen states have passed similar legislation.

The findings come as no surprise to Gunner Scott, executive director of the Massachusetts Transgender Political Coalition, who said workers often see their income levels drop when they start living openly as another gender.

“I explain it like a roller coaster,” Scott said. “The people in our community are so happy to finally live and identify and present who they are, and for many, the losses of support, employment, housing can come pretty immediately after that.”

Joanne Herman, a former finance director, felt she had to quit her job after informing her superiors she was going to start living as a woman in 2001. The chairman of the board stopped talking to her, and she said she couldn’t do her job without his support. She found another position but took a pay cut. “It’s sad that I had to do that because of this perception that somehow I wouldn’t be as capable when I transitioned,” she said.

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