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March 23, 2016

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Office of the Governor Nathan Deal  
206 Washington Street  
111 State Capitol  
Atlanta, Georgia 30334

Dear Governor Deal:

On behalf of the American Psychiatric Association (APA), the national medical specialty society representing more than 36,000 physicians specializing in psychiatry, we write to urge you to veto House Bill 757.

APA has long opposed discrimination against individuals in the LGBTQ community, whether that discrimination occurs in accessing health care services, education, employment, government services, housing, military service, or spousal rights. All forms of discrimination, including societal, religious, or family stigma, may adversely affect the mental health of individuals and necessitate intervention. Regrettably, House Bill 757 allows opportunities to promote discrimination within Georgia and should not be enacted.

Under your leadership, Georgia has achieved exemplary economic growth and has attracted many businesses that share our opposition of this misguided legislation. Many of these businesses stand as national role models in assisting their employees who are in mental or physical health crises by providing them with access to comprehensive care.

In May thousands of APA members will convene in Georgia for our 2016 Annual Meeting. APA has enjoyed a great partnership with the state of Georgia and the city of Atlanta to date. Our hope is that this partnership will continue long into the future. We stand with both the societal and economic leaders of your great state and urge you to veto House Bill 757 and take a stand against discrimination.

We thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Renée Binder, M.D.  
President

Saul Levin, M.D., M.P.A.  
CEO and Medical Director