

**Statement**  
**UPR Pre-session on the United States of America**  
**Delivered by Laurel Sprague, Research Director, The Williams Institute**  
**28th August 2025, Geneva**

714 words

**[SLIDE 1] - Title**

Distinguished representatives, my appreciation for your attention to our reports on the human rights situation in the United States of America.

**[SLIDE 2] - Introduction**

This presentation reviews U.S. compliance with its human rights obligations to lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people, in light of 4 previous recommendations to end anti-LGBT discrimination and violence, 35 recommendations to combat racism, and 23 recommendations to protect immigrants and asylum seekers.

I also discuss its catastrophic withdrawal of lifesaving humanitarian assistance, including through cuts to USAID.

I thank the many member states for their previous recommendations and regret that time limits prohibit me from recognizing you by name.

**[SLIDE 3] – Discrimination, Intolerance, and Violence**

Since the last review, the U.S. made no progress in reducing Discrimination, Intolerance, and Violence against LGBT people.

**[SLIDE 4] – Discrimination, Intolerance, and Violence, “LGBT People Endure...”**

Among other disparities, LGBT people **continue to be:**

- More than **2 to 4 times** more likely to live in poverty.
- **Five times more likely** to be violently attacked.
  
- **More than 1 in 4** LGBT youth experience homelessness
- **1 in 3** African American LGBT youth and **1 in 5** transgender adults lack enough food in a given week.
- Nearly **half** of LGBT workers experience discrimination in the workplace.

**[SLIDE 5] – Discrimination, Intolerance, and Violence, “40% of U.S....”**

Failures to address U.S. racism result in the **40%** of U.S. LGBT adults who are Black, Latino, Asian, or Indigenous experiencing substantially increased experiences of workplace discrimination, harassment, and poverty than either other LGBT people who are white or other people of color who are non-LGBT.

## [SLIDE 6] – Discrimination, Intolerance, and Violence, “Since January 2025...”

Beyond failing to progress, the current government is actively retrogressing.

This slide shows some of these actions.

Since January, the current administration has worked to:

- Scapegoat transgender people by officials at the highest levels
- Dismantle anti-discrimination protections,
- Remove transgender children and adults from participation in multiple aspects of public life,
- Force transgender women and girls to use washrooms for men and boys,
- Erase transgender people in federal data, and
- Cancel health research for LGBT and racial and ethnic minorities

## [SLIDE 7] – Discrimination, Intolerance, and Violence, “Recommendations”

Our full recommendations are in our factsheet. Let me highlight these:

### The US should

Adopt legislation that ensures legal recognition of gender identity and prohibits discrimination based on sex, sex characteristics, sexual orientation, and gender identity.

Take steps to end impunity for, and underreporting of, hate crimes based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

Reinstate systematic data collection on sexual orientation and gender identity, focused on reducing disparities, complying with stringent privacy protections.

## [SLIDE 8] – LGBT Immigrants and Asylum Seekers

The US treatment of LGBT Immigrants and Asylum Seekers is in violation of human rights conventions.

## [SLIDE 9] – LGBT Immigrants and Asylum Seekers, “In US detention...”

Detained LGBT immigrants face documented physical and sexual abuse, refusals of necessary medications, and more. Transgender women are now placed in men’s detention facilities, at increased risk of violence.

In the U.S., there are an estimated 640,000 LGBT immigrants without citizenship, now at risk of detention – including those with legal status.

We recommend the US

**Urgently ensure the safety** of LGBT people and people with health conditions in immigration detention and allow **independent human rights monitoring** of detention conditions.

**[SLIDE 10] – Foreign and Humanitarian Assistance**

In early 2025, the US abruptly terminated lifesaving Humanitarian Assistance

Countries were left to urgently organize new systems for care.

Vulnerable communities lost health care and medications, with clinical trials halted midstream.

LGBT-led organizations were often left without funding for their work.

**[SLIDE 11] – Foreign and Humanitarian Assistance, “Terminating aid...”**

We suggest that

**Terminating aid without action to minimize harm violates the fundamental human rights principle of non-retrogression on core socioeconomic rights to health and life with dignity.**

**[SLIDE 12] – Foreign and Humanitarian Assistance, “One infant is dying...”**

What are the outcomes of these cuts?

Best estimates indicate an additional 92,000 HIV deaths to date. 1 infant is dying of HIV every 31 minutes who would have survived.

Across all USAID cuts, an excess of 14 million deaths is estimated, including 4.5 million children, over the next 5 years.

**[SLIDE 13] – Foreign and Humanitarian Assistance, “Community-led LGBTI organizations...”**

The estimated 33% cut globally is devastating LGBTI organizations, who provide up to 78% of HIV prevention services and face increasing criminalization of LGBTI people.

**[SLIDE 14] – Foreign and Humanitarian Assistance, Recommendation**

We request Member States to recommend the US take steps to

Ensure that the withdrawal of U.S. assistance does not harm vulnerable communities by

- **Cooperating with independent human rights mechanisms** to assess impacts, and
- **Restoring support** to critical health programs.

**[SLIDE 15] – Contact us**

Distinguished representatives, thank you for your engagement here. Please reach out with any questions related to our report and topics.

[SLIDE 16 Extra Slide] – Questions for the U.S. Review

What is the U.S. doing to end discrimination, hate crimes, and other violence against LGBT people?

How is the U.S. ensuring that immigration detention facilities meet the safety and health needs of sexual and gender minorities?

With most SOGI data collection stopped, how will the U.S. track progress in protecting the political, civil, and socioeconomic rights of LGBT people?

After dismantling humanitarian aid programs, how is the U.S. addressing the impact on health infrastructure and provision, and on LGBT and other community-led health and human rights programs?