Office of the Mayor
City of Seattle
Edward B. Murray, Mayor

Executive Order 2016-04: An Executive Order prohibiting the use of City funds for non-essential official travel by all City employees on City business to the State of Mississippi after passage of House Bill 1523 ("the Bill") until further notice and reaffirming this Administration's continued commitment to civil rights and ensuring equity for all people in Seattle and beyond.

WHEREAS, the Mississippi Legislature passed and Mississippi Governor Phil Bryant signed into law the Bill, which invalidates civil rights protections for LGBTQ people; and

WHEREAS, the Bill provides that any person may assert a claim against the Mississippi state government for taking certain adverse actions against that person for discriminating against LGBTQ people; and

WHEREAS, the Bill provides that government cannot prevent public employees, social workers, and business from denying services based on the "moral conviction" that marriage is strictly between a man and a woman;

WHEREAS, the Bill provides that government cannot prevent business from making any employment-related decisions, including termination of a transgender employee, for the "moral conviction" that gender is determined at birth; and

WHEREAS, the Bill protects doctors who refuse to provide counseling, sex-reassignment surgery, fertility treatments and other services based on "moral convictions" and allows companies and schools to establish sex-specific policies regarding dress and bathroom use; and

WHEREAS, the Bill is inconsistent with the work and values of my Administration to promote equity, to end discrimination, to eliminate institutional racism and to advance social justice for the people of Seattle; and

WHEREAS, in his April 16, 1963, letter from Birmingham Jail, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., wrote, an "injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere;" the City of Seattle will not stand by idly while discriminatory laws like the Bill are enacted because such laws stand to threaten the equity victories in Seattle and elsewhere; and

WHEREAS, the City of Seattle will stand with those who are fighting for equity in Mississippi and elsewhere across the county; and

WHEREAS, the use of discretionary public taxpayer dollars should, to the extent possible, reflect the values of the people of our City and should not be used to support the economies of businesses and governments that support and enact discriminatory laws and policies; and

WHEREAS, it is within my authority as the Chief Executive of the City of Seattle to manage, direct and restrict the expenditure of funds appropriated annually through the adopted budget by the Seattle City Council;

Now therefore, I, Edward B. Murray, Mayor of Seattle, hereby affirm the City's commitment to civil rights and ensuring equity for all people in Seattle and beyond and order the following actions:

1. All Executive department and office employees are hereby prohibited from using City funds for non-essential travel on official City business to the State of Mississippi in light of the passage of the Bill until further notice.

Inquiries by City departments and offices regarding this Executive Order should be directed to Deputy Mayor Kate Joncas at (206) 684-4000.

Dated this 5th day of April, 2016

Edward B. Murray
Mayor, City of Seattle