



**GAY BUSINESS ASSOCIATION**

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ICANN and the Board Governance

ICANN

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January 18, 2015

Dear ICANN and the Board Governance Committee,

**RE: Reconsideration Request 14-44 (.GAY)**

Please accept this letter from the Gay Business Association containing our alarm over the CPE results for the .GAY top-level domain (TLD) community application by dotgay LLC.

The Gay Business Association (GBA) is an organisation focused on creating opportunity for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) professionals through networking, training and government advocacy. Formed in 1983 as a trade association to fight inequalities faced by LGBT people, GBA is today comprised of businesses, organisations and individuals actively promoting and supporting the seven strands of diversity throughout the United Kingdom, Channel Islands and the Isle of Man.

The ICANN new gTLD program is an initiative of great interest to the GBA and our support of the dotgay LLC community model for .GAY has been in place since 2011.

The Internet is undoubtable an important change agent, especially for those who identify as LGBT, queer or intersex. It has levelled the playing field and created opportunity not previously available in an anti-gay society, opening access where social and economic inequality remained a barrier because of discriminatory policy and practice in the real world. Opportunity is often where progress and equality are achieved for the gay community, and each diverse segment plays an important role in achieving success.

Minimizing or refuting the connection of any LGBT, queer, intersex or allied segment choosing to identify as part of the gay community, especially when it restricts opportunity, simply perpetuates and reveals a level of ignorance or naiveté. This is especially true if a dictionary definition is the only support referenced.

With full knowledge that a process exists for those seeking community priority status, there also exists legitimate authenticity in the dotgay LLC application, representing the dedicated work and collaboration of a cohesive community. To deny our community its opportunity so unjustly and without rebuke, while concealing the details on how such an ill reasoned CPE result was achieved, is both unacceptable and suspect.

Not only has a clear misunderstanding of our community and its members tainted results, but there also appears to be a blatant disregard to facts, letters, support and research provided by the community and dotgay LLC. There exists an unsettling desire by the EIU to protect a single 501c3 organisation and the illusion of opposition created by .GAY competitors before considering the interests of millions who rely and depend on the advocacy and leadership of those who have helped design and even endorse the dotgay LLC application.

Notwithstanding the ICANN policy and procedure compromises dotgay LLC identified in reconsideration request 14-44, it is GBA's opinion that more effort was put into finding ways to deny points then to understanding how our community warranted points. If ICANN is committed to introducing innovation, it should look long and hard at the community .GAY model delivered and ensure that reconsideration of the CPE results are approved.

Yours sincerely

Stephen Coote  
Director, GBA