



AMERICAN STATISTICAL ASSOCIATION
Promoting the Practice and Profession of Statistics®

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An Open Letter to Participants in the ASA's Women in Statistics and Data Science Conference

As a participant in the ASA's [Women in Statistics and Data Science Conference](#), we value the time and energy you have contributed and will continue to contribute to ensure the conference provides a dynamic scientific program and robust networking platform. I wanted to take this opportunity to update you on the ASA's response to a recently passed North Carolina law.

At its quarterly meeting in April, the ASA Board of Directors addressed North Carolina's Public Facilities Privacy and Security Act and other state discrimination laws throughout the country. Effective April 8, 2016, the board [adopted a resolution](#) forbidding the ASA from signing meeting contracts in states with discriminatory laws. This resolution, however, will not affect the Women in Statistics and Data Science Conference, as that meeting contract was signed before the North Carolina law was enacted. **The conference will take place as planned October 20–22, 2016, in Charlotte.**

More than symbolic, the ASA Board's action is in accordance with the association's [meeting conduct policy](#), which ensures meeting attendees experience a welcoming environment, free from discrimination, harassment, and retaliation and encourages free expression and the exchange of ideas. Regardless of the state in which discriminatory laws are enacted, such laws create negative environments for attendees and inhibit the ASA from fulfilling its overall mission to promote the practice and profession of statistics.

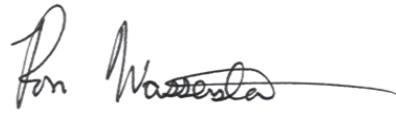
In addition to the board resolution, we sent a [letter to Governor Pat McCrory](#), explaining the organization's decision.

The ASA strives at all times to be an organization of integrity. We also chose *not* to move the meeting from Charlotte because the city was trying to provide a welcoming environment when it passed an ordinance earlier this year that would have protected against discrimination. Even though that ordinance was overridden by the aforementioned state law, we did not want to punish the City of Charlotte for the negative actions of others. Furthermore, withdrawing from the contractual agreement we made—without sufficient cause from the parties involved—seemed inappropriate to us.

Statistics and data science, by their nature, are interdisciplinary. Every day, statisticians and data scientists work collaboratively with other specialties, bringing together experts from a multitude of fields. That's what makes our work meaningful. It is in that same spirit that the ASA welcomes all people—including those in the LGBTQ communities—to have a seat at the table and at our meetings.

Should you have any questions or concerns about the ASA Board's resolution or our decision to leave the meeting in its scheduled location, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ron Wasserstein", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Ron Wasserstein
ASA Executive Director