



November 28, 2014

RE: Reconsideration Request (14-44) – CPE for dotgay LLC (ID# 1-1713-23699)

To members of ICANN and the ICANN Board Governance Committee,

We and the undersigned organizations and individuals are writing to express our deep concern over the CPE results for the .GAY top-level domain (TLD) community application by dotgay LLC.

Without question the Internet has changed the lives of LGBTQIA people, allowing those who thought they were alone to find others like themselves, opening doors for social and economic opportunities unavailable for our predecessors, and providing life-saving information. For those living in oppressive regimes, communities, and families, the Internet and the information and community-building resources of the Internet have been truly transformative.

The Federation of Gay Games and those joining us in this message applaud the efforts of ICANN to preserve the Internet as a space open to all, and have consistently hoped that the new TLD program would offer vital and unique opportunities in the Internet namespace, especially for communities identified as suspect classes, vulnerable to discrimination or at risk like LGBTQIA people.

We share your goal of making the Internet a tool for making opportunities a reality. For us, it's about sport: ensuring that the Olympic principle of sport for all is a reality for as many athletes as possible. Others focus on improving access to government and corporate contracts, on promoting participation in businesses and institutions, on removing legal obstacles to equality, on enhancing the ability for entrepreneurs and activists to organize.

Education within our community and to the wider world remains a crucial part of achieving success at each juncture. The understanding of the gay community that comes from the ongoing advocacy and outreach from our community organizations opens doors for the LGBTQIA. Our actions reach inside hearts and minds as well as inside governments and corporations. Biases, misconceptions, and misinformation about LGBTQIA people clearly remain a barrier to opportunity, so many of our organizations exist to engage and provide support to victims of such obstacles. Today, we are writing because we strongly believe that the CPE results on the community application of dotgay LLC is an obstacle we need to overcome through education, information, and collaboration.

In creating a community application, dotgay LLC sought open and transparent input from the gay community. It also developed a strategy to encompass and enhance the ability and safety of the greater gay community to advance and thrive online. Hundreds of national and international community groups have been part of this process, yet their endorsements have been almost totally ignored in the CPE review. We are amazed that so

much has rested on semantics. Are we a “community”, and does the string .GAY “represent” us? For all who have supported dotgay LLC's CPE application, the answer has been clear: yes, we are a diverse community, and yes, we want to find ourselves at .GAY.

This claim is not ours alone: abundant research, which seems to have been unconsulted, shows that “gay” is an important term for identifying ourselves. Our organization hosts the “Gay Games”, and they are for everyone who expresses solidarity with LGBTQIA people. It would be absurd for anyone to tell us that we cannot be the “Gay” Games because we welcome everyone who supports sport for all.

We urge you to not let those who would benefit financially from an auction for .GAY to cloud your understanding of what our community is, and what we want. The EIU ignored our reality: we want you to hear us and our call for an Internet that reflects our interests and needs, and that offers real opportunities for LGBTQIA people everywhere, even in places where they face persecution, imprisonment, and even death. The Internet is a space of opportunity and solidarity for our community: we need .GAY for our community.

For .GAY to be a space that serves our community, it needs to be administered for our benefit, and not for commercial interests. Without community participation or oversight in .GAY, no tangible opportunity or benefit exists for LGBTQIA people. Instead, confusion and harm are sure to be the result. Our strong and unified message to ICANN is that the limited perspective from which the dotgay LLC application has been evaluated does not reflect the reality, beliefs and opinions of our organization, our community, or those partners and allies endorsing this letter. We collectively view the CPE evaluation of dotgay LLC as flawed, one that inadequately represents a true understanding of our community. It provides a great disservice and disadvantage to LGBTQIA people worldwide.

Serving the public interest includes serving the needs and desires of LGBTQIA people, too. To force the community application into an auction in competition with Standard applications puts the community at great risk. Without a proper and transparent CPE evaluation, given that our community is deemed a “suspect class” and a group “vulnerable” to discrimination, we collectively struggle to understand whose interests are being served by ICANN.

Below you will find the list of affiliates, members, partners, friends and corporations who have lent their signature in support of this Federation of Gay Games statement of concern regarding the ICANN CPE process for community applications and our disagreement with the ICANN CPE result which denies LGBTQIA people community priority status for .GAY.

You have been able stewards for the general interest. We hope and expect that you will continue to do so, and recognize that the general interest requires a space for LGBTQIA people around the world to come together online, and that that space should be .GAY.

We thank you in advance for your consideration of the profound impact your decision will have on so many people around the world.

Les Johnson, Vice President for External Affairs, Federation of Gay Games, les.johnson@gaygames.net

(Please find on the following pages the businesses and organizations that offer their complete support for this letter.)

SUPPORTING BUSINESSES AND ORGANIZATIONS

Ackerman Brown PLLC

is a full service law firm located in the District of Columbia. The firm's attorneys are licensed to practice in the District of Columbia, Maryland, Virginia, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York, Texas and Illinois. The firm is the largest gay owned law firm in the United States certified by the National Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce.

AIDS Interfaith Ministries

Compassionate care, community education / awareness, assertive advocacy.

Arosa Gay Ski Week in Switzerland

Our organization became one of Europe's favorite Ski Pride Festival and will celebrate its 11th Annual next January.

Balady Promotions

The source for unique promotional products for over 20 years.

BeLoNG To

is the national organization for lesbian, gay, bisexual & trans young people in Ireland.

BUEGay

is an Argentinian company with more than 13 years of leadership in the LGBT market.

Capital Area Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce

Advocating, empowering, promoting and facilitating the success of LGBT businesses, professionals and allies in metropolitan Washington.

Çavaria

is the Flemish LGBT umbrella organization and represents more than 120 organizations in the Dutch-speaking region of Belgium.

CenterLink

The Community of LGBT Centers.

Coalition of Activist Lesbians Australia

is a UN-accredited organization working for the equitable inclusion and participation of lesbian women. This organization supports the mission of dot.GAY to their use of their domain. Commercialization and fiscal interests should not over-rule the rights and equitable participation of minority groups. LGBTI people have a right to control their internet use.

Columbia FunMap, Inc. and www.gayosphere.com

have been providing valuable information to the gay community for over 33 years.

Community Alliance and Action Network (C.A.A.N)

is a grassroots, volunteer, self-funded, advocacy organization for LGBTQ concerns.

Danny Pryor

an AP award-winning journalist with 15 years' experience in website development and 26 total years in broadcasting and web.

Diverlex Diversidad e Igualdad a Través de la Ley

is a Venezuelan collective organization founded in 2004, aiming at obtaining equal rights for LGBTI population. It has served as the World Trans Secretary of ILGA from 2012 to 2014.

Durban Gay & Lesbian Film Festival

is the only city-based LGBTI film festival in Africa and in 2015 celebrates its 5th festival providing space for human rights workshops, creative workshops, community and public film screenings.

Equal India Alliance

is a non-profit working towards increasing acceptance for LGBTIA individuals in India.

The Fund in the Sun Foundation

was established in 2005 as a not-for-profit public charity dedicated to the LGBT community and Fire Island Pines.

i freedom Uganda

is a sexual minority led digital security and internet freedom organization based in Uganda, we work with sexual minorities in Uganda and their allies the sex workers.

Gay Travel Exchange

is a community of travelers and hosts that makes traveling easier, less expensive and more rewarding.

Greater Palm Springs Pride (pspride.org)

is a 501(c)(3) non-profit community enhancement organization founded to promote the public education and public awareness of individual rights and civil liberties of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community and to promote the history, diversity and future prosperity of the Greater Palm Springs LGBT community.

Immigration Link

Canadian immigration consultant specializing in Family Class applications for same sex couples.

IGLTA, the International Gay & Lesbian Travel Association

is the leading member-based global organization dedicated to LGBT tourism.

ILGA, the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association

is a world federation of more than 1200 national and local LGBTI organizations. It is based in Geneva, Switzerland and enjoys consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council.

InterPride

is the international association of Pride organisers.

James A. Hoffman, LMT**JBaxterDC Web Solutions**

is an out and proud web-based business serving the globe for web solutions.

KaleidosScot

is the hub and online cultural and news centre for the LGBTI community of Scotland.

LEGIT-Toronto

Canadian immigration for same sex couples. We help same sex couples with their Canadian immigration needs. Most couples are a foreigner and a Canadian or Canadian Permanent Resident, some are both foreigners.

LGBT Forum “PROGRESS“

is a non-profit organization that gathers LGBTIQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex and Queer) people in Montenegro and it stands for respect and protection of their human rights and equality in society.

LGBTS Global at Stark State College

A student organization providing a comfortable safe space - where diverse and accepting people socialize, educate, advocate and serve.

MAD MultiMedia, LLC

is a full service printing company complete with traditional offset to digital printing which includes variable data/imagery and also website, storefront and mobile apps development.

Maui Sunseeker LGBT Resort

One of the top hotels for same-sex weddings and honeymoons.

Mosaic LGBT Youth Centre

offers support, education and empowerment to LGBT young persons in London.

The National Association of Gay & Lesbian Real Estate Professionals (NAGLREP)

is a mission based trade organization combining business and advocacy to advance homeownership for the LGBT community.

The National Center for Lesbian Rights (NCLR)

has been advancing the civil and human rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people and their families through litigation, legislation, policy, and public education since it was founded in 1977.

OutCentral

has a mission to connect, educate, empower, and build a positive, energy-filled space for greater Nashville's diverse lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community.

Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays South Africa

Our aim is to help parents with lesbian and gay children to come to terms with the fact, and to reconcile them with their children. We raise awareness of the Human Rights issue in regards to the LGBT situation.

Prague4gay

is a guiding agency which takes great pride in having provided exclusive tours to members of the LGBTQIA community visiting Prague since 2005.

Prague Pride Civic Association

is a non-governmental, non-political, non-profit organization promoting a tolerant civil society, fighting homophobia and increasing public awareness of the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community in the Czech Republic.

The Pride Shelter Trust

is Africa's ONLY LGBTI Crisis Shelter based in Cape Town – and we had the pleasure of hosting the FGG annual Meeting in 2008, and support this initiative.

Pride United

is committed to combat state-sponsored homophobia and build social acceptance for LGBTI's around the globe using the strategy of high profile politics.

Q Magazine

is the only A5 free to street monthly glossy magazine of its kind in Australia.

Rainbow Community Kampuches (RoCK)

is an LGBTQ organization run by and for Cambodian LGBTQ. We advocate for recognition and respect for human rights and needs of LGBTQ in Cambodia.

Rainbow Link

We gather LGBT books, CDs and DVDs and give them free to LGBT groups across Canada. We also give them to university, college and school libraries.

Rainbow Wellington

is a community group based in New Zealand's capital city, which advocates on behalf of the local LGBTI communities, offers networking and social opportunities within the communities, and supports other community groups and projects.

Rodan Media

is a media development company specializing in domain and website development and video production for small business.

SPI Marketing

is a boutique LGBT agency with BIG capabilities.

Story Center Productions, LLC

is a film production company based in DC. The company produced CODEBREAKER, an award winning drama documentary about the life and legacy of gay hero Alan Turing.

TierPM

is an Audio Visual and Information Technology staffing and talent solutions agency.

TourGuidePeru

Our compromise is to promote Peru, its heritage and the important message of responsible tourism around the world.

United Belize Advocacy Movement, UniBAM

is an LGBT led human rights advocacy organization that uses rights-base approaches to reduce stigma and discrimination.

Whistler Pride and Ski Festival

.GAY must remain within the community to ensure the interests of the LGBT community are protected and avoid being exploited by commercial interests that do not give back or build community.

The Yerger Group

is the parent company for the entrepreneurial ventures of Ross Yerger, which currently include Yerger Tech, a web and social media development and management company, and Chez Yergs, an elite, not elitist Caribbean Resort.