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February 18, 2018

SENT VIA EMAIL

Mr. Cherine Chalaby  
ICANN Board Chair  
12025 Waterfront Drive, Ste 300  
Los Angeles, CA 90094

RE: dotgay LLC Application for .GAY

Dear ICANN Board Directors,

Sero would like to express our ongoing support of dotgay LLC's community application for .GAY and also express our frustration with the inexplicable complacency and lack of action on the demonstrative evidence surrounding discriminatory treatment .GAY has received.

Sero is a U.S.-based network of people living with HIV and allies fighting for freedom from HIV-related stigma and injustice. Sero is also a founding partner in the HIV Justice Worldwide consortium, a network of HIV-related human rights organizations around the globe.

In Sero's quest to address HIV-related homophobia, stigma and injustice we combat ignorance and indifference. Sometimes it is rooted in misplaced fear, other times it is simply the unwillingness of leadership to take action that may embarrass, disrupt or expose unfair practices within their purview. Our voice helps to ensure facts and data are properly considered in order to better inform reactions and decisions.

Our support for the dotgay LLC community application (.GAY) remains strong. Since *gay* is unequivocally a globally utilized and recognized term for the community of LGBTQIA persons, having community operation and oversight of the .GAY domain is imperative. Knowing the tremendous disadvantage and marginalization continuing to face the global gay community, it is astonishing that ICANN is complicit in preventing .GAY from its proper stewardship in the hands of the LGBTQIA community and dotgay LLC.

As Executive Director of Sero, I have remained engaged in dotgay LLC's pursuit of accountability at ICANN. I assumed that the facts and analysis presented in the initial report from Professor William Eskridge would lead ICANN to understand and acknowledge the manner in which dotgay LLC has been mishandled.

*Describing the process* and repeated assertions of *no wrongdoing* by FTI Consulting does not address the glaring mistreatment and discriminatory treatment of .GAY. Dotgay

LLC was clearly cheated of points and burdened by standards beyond other community applications and requirements of the Applicant Guidebook.

To ignore such obvious facts and refuse to even acknowledge the many shortcomings of the FTI Consulting reports only implicates the ICANN Board further.

As a network of longtime advocates that stand up against injustice, we request that the ICANN Board act within its empowered authority and be the interruption required in the mistreatment of dotgay LLC. The Board needs to end what has amounted to no less than egregious inconsistencies in CPE scoring and award community priority status to .GAY. Doing the right thing is never a liability, especially when the facts support it.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sean Strub". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Sean Strub  
Executive Director